THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCHMEN'S UNION

By the Editor.

WE publish in this number of the *Modern Churchman* a portrait of the Very Reverend William Ralph Inge, C.V.O., D.D., F.B.A., Dean of St. Paul's, who at the annual meeting of the Churchmen's Union on May 27th was elected President of that body in succession to the Very Reverend Hastings Rashdall, D.D., D.Litt., F.B.A., late Dean of Carlisle.

The Churchmen's Union is to be congratulated on its new President, whom, it is not invidious to describe, as intellectually the most distinguished of the English clergy. Although members of the Churchmen's Union would not claim that it is the most intellectual of our Church societies, yet inasmuch as the Churchmen's Union exists primarily to deal with religion in its intellectual relations—the full title of the body is 'The Churchmen's Union for the Advancement of Liberal Religious Thought'—it is of importance that its Presidents should be Churchmen of intellectual eminence. Those who do not know very much about the purpose or membership of the Churchmen's Union are disposed at times to ask somewhat plaintively why the Churchmen's Union does not advocate slum sanitation, or the League of Nations, or Foreign Missions, or the

reform of the Drink Trade, or some other of the hundred interests which engage the support of numbers of our fellow-Churchmen. The reply of course is that these things are not primarily the purpose for which the Churchmen's Union exists. Moreover, there are many other societies which do exist to achieve these objects, and as members of the Churchmen's Union already support a number of these societies, it would be a profound mistake for the Churchmen's Union to trespass into their spheres. The cause of intellectual truth and intellectual freedom in our English religion is a sufficiently great and also sufficiently unpopular cause to command all the energy and resources of the Churchmen's Union. It is important therefore that its Presidents should possess conspicuous intellectual powers and be equally conspicuous for intellectual fearlessness.

Dr. Inge first became known throughout the whole Anglican Communion as a religious teacher of acute mind and deep spiritual insight by his Bampton Lectures on *Christian Mysticism* (1899). For many that book opened up a new approach both to the study and the practice of religion. Its promise has not been belied by what has followed from the same pen. *Faith and Knowledge* (1904), *Truth and Falsehood in Religion* (1906), *Personal Idealism and Mysticism* (1907), *Faith and its Psychology* (1910), *Speculum Animae* (1911), *Outspoken Essays* (both series), and *The Life of Devotion* (1924) have formed a wonderful sequence of inspiring religious teaching for educated persons. The Dean's greatest contribution to contemporary religious literature is undoubtedly his Gifford lectures on the philosophy of Plotinus, in which the rational and spiritual are seen not in opposition but in unity. It illustrates Whichcote's golden saying: 'Sir, I oppose not rational to spiritual, for spiritual is most rational.'

The Dean's school of Churchmanship may be described as Liberal Protestant, and although the Churchmen's Union includes a number of Liberal Catholics amongst its members, yet its Presidents have so far been Liberal Protestants. The Dean's recent statement (published in *The Review of the Churches*) on the subject of re-union with Rome sums up very clearly and concisely his religious convictions, and however

little such a statement may be appreciated in clericalist circles, there is no doubt that it does meet with a sympathetic response in the breast of the average English layman.

We are told that Protestantism has shown that it has no cohesion; its divisions are a scandal. May there not be a unity of spirit without uniformity of worship? May not the diversities of gifts under the same Spirit find legitimate expression in varying types of service, and even of Church organization? We acknowledge no such insuperable barriers as those which Catholicism sets up between Catholics and non-Catholics. Barriers there are, which we regret; but we remember that our Saviour desired that His sheep might be all one flock; He never wished to pen them into one fold. Christ broke down all barriers, except those which separate the sincere, the spiritual, and the loving from the hypocrite, the worldly, and the hard-hearted. He broke them down by ignoring them, and He set up no new barriers in their place.

The Reformation aimed at a return to the Christianity of the Gospels. In this it only partially succeeded; but it stripped off most of the accretions under which we lay smothered, accretions which do not belong to Christianity at all, but to the immemorial superstitions of the Mediterranean races. Protestantism realized that Christ stood in the prophetic, not in the priestly succession, and that His teaching about worship was much the same as that of Micah. 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? . . . He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?'

This moral and spiritual creed, individualistic and universalist, but not sectarian or political, enriched by the Pauline and Johannine Christ-mysticism, is enough for Protestants. It is irreconcilable with Catholicism as it exists in the Roman Church, and concessions are dangerous, for, as Harnack says, how often, when an old doctrine or ritual has been 'reinterpreted,' but left standing, the old meaning suddenly comes back again. The actual words prove stronger than anything else. Someone has to stand up and say, 'The old is done away with'; as St. Paul said, and the Reformers.

Protestantism has no dazzling prospects to offer in politics. It will build no Vaticans, issue no Interdicts, sign no Concordats, win no Kulturkamf. It has no 'interests' except the highest welfare of humanity; but in making these renunciations it is following Him Who said, 'My Kingdom is not of this world,' not him who said, 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'

I am very sorry that what I have written on this subject has given offence to Roman Catholics. I respect all sincere convictions; but it is necessary to tell some of our rulers plainly that the majority of Anglicans have no more wish to be 'reconciled' with the Pope than with the Grand Lama. In plain language, we won't have it at any price.

THE THEOLOGICAL OUTLOOK[1]

By the Rev. J. M. Wilson, Canon of Worcester.

YOUR President has asked me to address you on 'The Theological Outlook in the light of my long experience': or, as an alternative title, 'A survey of the progress in the adaptation of old theology to new knowledge which I myself have witnessed, with some of my own personal experiences.' With much reluctance I have obeyed his reiterated request, and will waste no time in apologies. I can but do my best. But it is a fearfully difficult task, and I cannot quite foresee whither I shall be led.

What is the Old Theology of which I have seen a progressive adaptation? That seems the starting point. I think that what your President meant, and certainly what I mean, is what I described in my sermon yesterday[2] as the *Credenda* of most Church people sixty or seventy years ago, rather than what we know as the Creeds. The *credenda* and *credita* of any period, that is the current universal assumptions, are its real theology. They are to its creeds and articles, what the visible flesh of a living man is to the invisible framework of his bones. The *Creeds* remain the same; the *credenda* change insensibly but greatly.

For example, when I came up to Cambridge in 1855, nearly seventy years ago, the *credenda*, the postulated universal belief of all Christian people, as far as I knew, included at least the four following articles. Indeed these seem to me, as I look back, to have constituted nearly the whole of the living and acting Christian faith of that day. And that faith, remember, was a very great reality, and is still deeply rooted among us.

Four articles I said. The first, that the whole of the Bible came straight from God, and was correct and true in every word. 'It says so in the Bible' was conclusive.

The second, that every incident in life, and its general social order, were 'providential'; the will and action of God for each individual man and class.

[1] An Address given to the 'D' Society, Cambridge, on May 19th, 1924.
[2] Published by the University Press, Cambridge.

The third, that all men were so involved in Adam's guilt as to deserve hell; and the only escape from it was by believing that the Son of God came down from heaven and was punished instead of us.

The fourth, that we ought therefore, out of gratitude, to avoid sin, and might then go to heaven.

We repeated our Creeds and Catechism, and read the Bible, every word of it. But the working religion, as far as I can recall it, was unaffected by Creed or Catechism, or even the Bible. This was the Old Theology, which I have seen adapted to the new knowledge which you have inherited.

Some may be inclined to ask: Did we schoolboys and undergraduates and church-goers generally seventy years ago really believe all this? I answer that as boys we did not think about it enough to doubt it; we accepted it. I cannot remember doubting or resenting anything I heard in sermons or read in tracts, except some missionary addresses at school. I remember one missionary estimating the population of China at four hundred millions, and the average of life at forty years. The figures I suppose interested me, specially when he went on to calculate how many died every year, how many every day, hour, minute. That was exciting. Then a pause, and then with hands uplifted—'All these now in everlasting torments in hell.'

The average church-goer accepted this rather than believed it. And the reason is plain. The authority, on which all that we heard was based, was unquestioned. We did, people in general did, accept this teaching as Bible and Church teaching, though many of course did not believe it. This was the Old Theology.

It is, I think, worth your while to study how very great the change has been in one life-time, because there may be going on a similar change in yours; and it is worth your while also to reflect how it came about. I do not now attempt to describe the process.

To speak of the past is relatively easy. But, I suppose, I must turn to the far more obscure, and more immediate problem which your President has set me, 'The Theological Outlook,' 'the prospect of the future of theology.'

I say at once that I see no prospect of smooth water either in Theological or Ecclesiastical matters. And I would comfort you with the thought that the periods of smooth waters in the Church have not been periods we look back on with thankfulness and admiration: I think we regard them as periods of stagnation; as dull, dark and dead ages. The twentieth century is not likely to be dull, dark or dead. It is an age worth living in, as ours has been. The motive force is just the same still: I cannot doubt that it is the Holy Spirit of God; the Eternal Word which has developed man up to his present stage. It is a period of active and continuous creation. The same Creative Spirit is moving him still to ever greater efforts of research in every department of human knowledge, culminating in *a resolve to attain higher standards of evidence and truth in the department of religion.* That resolve is the main feature in my outlook: and therefore I am more than hopeful; I am confident.

But I must get to particulars, to illustrate some parts of the problems before you young men.

I will take first the problem of *authority*. I have told you that the inerrancy and divine authorship of the Bible was, till within my memory, the unquestioned authority: and the Bible is the authority still, since the authority of our Creeds is based on that of the Bible by the eighth article. The unwritten tradition of the Church may of course be quoted to support it. But ultimately the authority for the historic faith which we hold as Christians is the Bible.

Now some fifty or sixty years ago, in the days of Bradlaugh and 'The National Reformer,' the attacks on the Bible were overwhelming: the defects, historical, scientific, moral, of the Old Testament were proclaimed aloud. The times were exciting and critical. There is no hostility now to compare with it.

The problem before Reformers then was, in the interests of truth, to admit fully the human authorship of the Bible; but also to maintain its unique and immense value in religion.

Some of us from the very first tried to show that to read the Bible in the new light, as the human history of God's education

of the spirit of man in one remarkable race, would increase its value. But the Church as a whole did not so understand the position. You have to restore, we had only to retain, but under new conditions, the immense value of the Bible read intelligently as a record of part of the evolution of religion.

In my outlook then for your work in theology I put first the restoration of the unique value of the Bible: not on the old ground of its being inerrant; but as far the most illuminating record of the steady evolution of man's knowledge of God, of the good news, and the certainty, of man's spiritual life and link to God, and of his duty and destiny. It is yours to restore the Bible to a higher place, though a very different place, in the religion of Christendom. Authority, I repeat, is essential; and the Bible, rightly used, may again be an authority of unapproachable value. And it is not too late to restore it, if you dare speak freely. The ultimate authority for the Christian faith is, as I said yesterday, the witness of the Spirit of God in men to the universal Fatherhood of God fully manifested in the historic Jesus Christ.

There is a second element in my outlook on Theology which I shall bring before you not in my own words, but in those of much more weighty persons, which have however attracted curiously little attention.

Listen to this quotation from the Report of the Archbishops' Committee of a few years ago on Evangelistic work. Note every word of it. 'If the Church,' it says, 'is to preach to this generation an evangel which will grip, it must come in some real sense as news; news powerful enough to change the whole mental and spiritual outlook.' Think what this implies, as well as what it says. It implies that what the Church is now preaching as its message does not, will not, cannot, 'grip.' It says that the real evangel, when, if ever, the Church preaches it, will come as '*news*' to the generation that first hears it. We are now, it implies, in the dark ages. 'The news' will be so startling, so thrilling, as to *change* the whole mental and spiritual outlook of the nation. It will *convert* the nation. Think of it. I have not added anything to what the Report itself has implicitly said. Why did not this Report rouse the leaders and champions of the Church either to indignant denial

or immediate action, or at least elicit from the nation some protest or demand? What is the explanation? Is it that everybody knew it before? or is it that among the clergy and leaders of the Church nobody knew what to do? and that among the nation at large nobody cared what the clergy did? or that nobody believed that anything would or could be done?

There is some truth in every one of these suggestions. The fact *is* widely recognized: our evangel does *not* arrest and 'grip.' We clergy *don't* see what the new evangel is which will grip: and the nation is *not* much interested; and *is* rather hopeless. But I think there is another serious reason why so authoritative a statement of an admitted and most alarming fact has attracted so little attention.

We are all silent, I think, because we feel that the New Evangel will be pronounced heretical. We are not free to speak the truth. In the fourth century the Church made a united effort to reconcile men's experience of the immense spiritual value of the faith of Christ with the philosophy and mental outlook of the time. It was wonderfully successful. By the sixteenth century, much had to be reformed, and some freedom was won, at a very heavy cost. Now the *Ecclesia Anglicana* has to face similar problems. If we try to keep theology strictly within the limits fixed in the days of relative ignorance, we are heading for a conflict ruinous to faith. If the *Ecclesia Anglicana* is to be for ever bound to the theology of the fourth or sixteenth or any century, it is doomed. Truth must be placed *first*, or our faith can never 'grip' the world.

Our age is eliciting subtlety, ingenuity, and intense earnestness in trying to read new truth into phrases that were meant to convey another, perhaps an opposite, meaning. It is *creating apologists, not apostles*, inside the Church; and outside the Church something of contempt or despair or indifference. That is fatal. Apologists are not apostles. Truth must come first; nothing else will 'grip.'

Part of my outlook then is that the *Ecclesia Anglicana* will have to win greater freedom. It has to decide whether it will sacrifice truth in its efforts to create some union with Rome; or lead the way in search for truth in reliance on the Holy Spirit of God, and disregard the cry of heresy that has followed every

spiritual advance that the world has ever seen. It is no longer stoning, crucifying, burning, that the Church has recourse to: but excommunicating and boycotting and slandering. The Pope excommunicates George Tyrrell, and Zanzibar excommunicates Hereford: Churchmen and Christians of different types boycott and disparage one another, alike faithful to Christ: and truth is forgotten, and the search for it condemned. This must cease.

But I must pass on to a third point in the outlook. Of course the fundamental question in theology is the conception we are to form of God. How ought we to think of the Creator and Ruler of the Universe and Man? This is far the greatest question of all; and one which must be ever renewed and revised.

On this conception there is, it seems to me, an as yet unbridged chasm between the present axioms and inferences of traditional religion, and those of science and philosophy. I do not regard these axioms and inferences as contradictory, but as supplemental; and some day they will be so seen. If I am to suggest here, *in camera*, any conjecture how this fusion or convergence will be effected, I cannot but say that I believe that some day our conception of God will have become independent of nearly all that has come into it from the primitive Jewish tribal and other pagan conceptions of God which have passed into Christianity, and that our conception will be constantly renewed and growing from all human knowledge and experience, from all science, philosophy and psychology, all seen in the light of Christ. For men in general I believe that the practical result of such conception will be in substance and essentials identical with what we shall then judge to have been the real thought of Christ, and will carry the authority of both reason and conscience and of the faith of Christ. But that identity can scarcely be recognized until it may be openly said that it was not possible even for Christ to express, or for His hearers to report, under the limitations of the vocabulary, the knowledge, and the presuppositions of His age, all that the Divine in Christ knew and felt and desired to teach about God. The identity will come out by deeper study, and in a holier and clearer atmosphere, than ours. It will not come, as I think,

from commentaries and apologetics, founded only on Christ's words; reading, as it were, between the lines. The real evangel will come, and is coming, as I believe, as unnoticeably as the dawn, from the sum of human moral consciousness and experience. The source will be none the less the work of the Holy Spirit, who is, and for ages has been, guiding men into truth. That conception of God towards which theology, science, philosophy, psychology are leading us, will take its own form, which narrow and suspicious Churchmen, as they have done in every age, will condemn as heretical; and then after a time the world will exclaim: 'That explains Christ: that must have been His vision, for which there were then neither words nor audience ready; that was the thought His hearers very partially understood, very imperfectly reported.'

My outlook, though I feel now in my old age incapable of giving it proper expression, is of this kind. That through the presence in man of the Holy Spirit, a real Evangel of God and of Christ is at hand, behind as it were a slight and removable screen; and that it only needs a prophet to discern and proclaim it, and all will see its truth. It needs a prophet

qualem nequeo monstrare, et sentio tantum.

I believe it will come to us largely by better understanding of the Bible, and the free use of selections from it; largely also through the frank recognition of Evolution, as God's method of creation and development of the soul and spirit, as well as of the body and mind, of man; that it will come in some part from sources apparently independent of Old and New Testament and the Church, God having been the Father of all men; and that it will be such that it could not have been generally anticipated earlier. The words did not exist, nor had the thoughts been formed, in which even Christ could have expressed it, or the apostles received it. Still less could the great majority of our teachers of the remote past whom we honour have seen the new Evangel as men could see it now; and as our children will see it, if we win for them the right to use freedom in seeing it.

It will have been understood, I hope, that my outlook for the future of theology is largely affected, almost determined,

by an ever-present consciousness that we are at a stage in a very long process of Evolution. The difference between the present outlook for theology and that of sixty-five years ago is, I think, chiefly due to that consciousness—a consciousness with which I expect most of you began life. The difference is simply immense. The human race is evolving; and we as individuals are becoming more and more conscious that we are responsible agents, with large freedom, as well as subjects, in this evolution. This thought has, with some of us, transformed every part of our theology, our whole way of regarding the past, present, and future of our race. Combine this with the conception of the Creator which Newman ventured to express two generations ago—that he saw no trace of morality in nature till man appeared. All morality, all right and wrong, all conscious purpose, is a product of a very long evolutionary process in man. We can see the results nowhere but in human nature. There it is; and we therefore infer that it is in the Creative Power, in God; is part of the Divine Nature and Purpose in creation.

You and I are now, therefore, or may become, conscious and free agents of the Creator. We share something of His vision, His freedom, His power, His will—something of Himself. We are His children. Word it how we will. We are working with our Creator in the making of a new heaven and a new earth. This is a great dynamic, a real evangel. This will grip: and this will come as 'news.'

My outlook for theology contemplates the wider recognition of this as the fundamental fact. It has boundless hope. There has slowly grown up in the human race in the ages past this sense of God, of purpose, of Spirit, of right and wrong: there has been an evolution of this Spirit which differentiates us from our remote bodily ancestors: it is a progress towards a more perfect and diviner humanity, and is one in which every one is called on to play his part. The great age of man is yet to come: and we are preparing for it.

This is the motive and goal of education. Life is a scene of evolution, and therefore of struggle. This thought reconciles me to the confusion and fog that hangs over it. The general scheme is being guessed. The goal of evolution, seen

in glimpses, by science and theology alike, is Deity. But it is far off.

To welcome evolution as the divine process of creation will illuminate and co-ordinate all our theology. It helps us to see, as part of the divine order, the illumination that came with Jesus Christ into this dim and struggling world. It was an immense step in that age-long purposeful process which had 'at sundry times and in divers manners,' for millennia past, been revealing God to man. To be a thorough-paced evolutionist, in the world of spirit as in all else, is a long step towards being a convinced Christian.

The goal of religion is to have fellowship with God, fellowship in understanding and in a love that casteth out fear. The desire for the realization of that fellowship, faint in its origin, is implanted in human nature. And far the greatest educational help for that realization, whether in the past or present, is found in Christ's teaching; and this sense of union with Him through the Divine Spirit within us comes to those who will learn of Him.

This is no Modernist notion. I am only saying what St. Paul said (*Eph.* i, 18) in words I used to pass over as saying nothing particular, '*Through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*' These words now grip me. I declare that they contain enough theology for me. I want no more. *Through Christ*—that is by loving, serving, following, studying, adoring Christ, men have got, and we may and do get, to understand and love God—*we have access* to God. And we do this *by one Spirit*, and those words to me imply, or rather declare, that our Spirit, by which we approach God, is identical with the Spirit of Jesus, and the Spirit of God: that there is only *one* Holy Spirit, and that we all share it. That is the eternal link between God and man—that our Creator has made us sharers of His Spirit, which He showed in full in Jesus, and that by that Spirit we are called to be in our measure creators, saviours, inspirers. I believe this to be the outlook of our theology; a great and simple and inspiring truth; and I long to see much stripped away which now conceals and disfigures it. I believe this is the new evangel which will grip Christendom. Could it have been better put than in our Collect? 'O

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life, grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that following the steps of Thy holy apostles we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life.'

Our prayer is that we may know Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He illuminates, explains, guides our life. I do not think it necessary for unity in the Church of Christ for us all to hold or profess any inferential dogmas or opinions about the nature of Christ's birth or resurrection or ascension, or His relation to the Father of all. By the nature of the case those opinions are inferential, unverifiable. I frankly confess I have no such fixed opinions. Something happened on these occasions But in my judgment there is neither historic nor scientific evidence as yet to enable anyone to define with certainty what took place.

But I believe and am sure (and that is my outlook and hope for theology) that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life; and that our access to God is most surely made through sharing and showing the Spirit of God which was manifested in Him. And we must 'abide in Christ,' for otherwise we shall bear no fruit. And to abide in Christ means, as I think, for us all, to be living active members of His Great Church on earth; and in general of that section of it in which we were born, and to be in unity of spirit with all who are in other sections so trying to abide in Him. We must hold together, and 'bear much fruit; so shall we be His disciples.'

There is one possible inference which someone may perhaps draw from this my whole-hearted acceptance of evolution: and I wish explicitly to exclude it. It may be inferred that I have come to think that the lives of past and present generations of men are but as the leaves of a tree, themselves transitory, perishable; valuable only as contributing to the evolution of something to come. No. I cannot believe that we, and all earlier generations, are no more than this, existing only as a means for some hypothetical and uncertain end. I do not so read Christ. We must be more than means. It is the individual whom Christ loved, and it is the individual, the human beings now on earth, whom we ought to love and care for. The indi-

vidual may share eternal life. That is, as I feel, the verdict of the voice of God within on that dark question.

My outlook for theology is certainly not that it will be all plain and free from mystery. But I think that you and those who follow you will see the great issues more plainly than we do, and will pull down some of the screens we and others have made which obscure the light. It is a strange world, and will remain so. We are born into a battlefield; we can recognize that there is a fight between good and evil: and we cannot doubt on which side we ought to fight. But we do not fight for any end or cause that we can exactly define, except that so we obey God's call. We must fight for Him, not for any reward or crown; for by fighting for Him we shall be in Him and He in us: and it will be well with us, and that is enough to know.

THE MORAL FACTOR IN SOCIETY

By Miss M. D. Petre, authoress of *The Life of Father Tyrrell*.

IT is not in periods of peace and prosperity, but in times of war and tribulation, that the prophet arises. The seers of Israel uttered their messages in her days of sorrow and despair; then it was they spoke their words of bitter warning, but then it was also that they poured forth their highest songs of hope. In days of war they promised peace; in days of stress and torment they spoke of a world to come in which men should cease to be cruel and animals should cease to be savage; in which righteousness and equity and mercy should prevail; in which the strong should be tender and the weak should be without fear; a world in which 'the calf and the lion and the sheep should abide together.' And this prophecy could only be fulfilled in virtue of such a change of natural law as that by which the lion shall satiate his appetite with straw.

This phenomenon of hope insurgent in the midst of sorrow and despair is not peculiar to Israel. It is almost always in the times of greatest human trouble that men are found to proclaim the advent of a more glorious future. Not only is man to

be, once again, as happy as he was before, but he is to be much happier; a world red with carnage is to be transformed into a world of peace; a society in which national and class rivalry, fierce egotism and material greed are rampant is to be changed into one ruled by the law of love and disinterestedness.

What is the source of this hope that clasps our stricken humanity like love amidst the ruins? For some that hope is lighted from the skies—they raise their eyes to the heavens whence help shall come. For others that hope is inspired by human nature itself; they scan the resources of earth, and not the clouds of heaven. Yet for all of us, believers in another world and unbelievers, those who turn their eyes quite definitely to God and those who look exclusively to man, there is surely some hidden spring of life that is accountable for this sense of hope and vitality that mocks adverse conditions. We believe in life because, at bottom, we feel that we are alive, and not only alive but, in some manner, destined to remain so. Whatever be our belief, or our disbelief, in regard to the question of personal survival, we have an unquenchable sense of immortality in our ineradicable sense of belonging to something that will go on when we, as we at present are, shall have ceased to be. It is that same sense of immortality that checks the exaggerations of altruism as of egoism, the most selfish cannot, whatever they think, be wholly indifferent to the future welfare of mankind, the most unselfish cannot wholly detach their own interests from the future fortunes of humanity.

In M. Loisy's recent work—*La Morale Humaine*[1]—one of those books which he brings out from time to time, and which, small as their size in comparison with his great exegetical works, are big in the lifetime of thought which they represent—he too offers a message of hope to a stricken world; but whereas he is at one with such social philosophers as Mr. Bertrand Russell in his recognition of the weakening force of religious creeds, he differs from that school in so far as his quest is for some other form of spiritual and religious standard, and in so far as he makes the question of moral responsibility paramount.

[1] *La Morale Humaine.* Alfred Loisy. (Emile Nourry, Paris.)

Moral responsibility, this is the keynote of M. Loisy's message; he believes that society can help itself; that, through all material vicissitudes, man can and does shape his own destiny. He is not a God, he is not omnipotent, and fluctuations of success and failure are inevitable; but the main line of progress can be maintained. Even in regard to the physical laws of his own nature, man, as well as animals, possess some formative and initiative power; still more in the domain of moral development.

> 'Morality leads man into a world not subject to fatality, not ruled by necessity; it leads him into a world of conscious liberty . . . into the order of essential, and not merely phenomenal, truth; into the order of disinterested love' (p. 18).

But human society is limited in its power of self-development, and limited, chiefly, by its own past. On this point one becomes at once conscious of the different way in which human nature is regarded by those who behold it in its historic setting and those who have no sense or knowledge of its past. A good deal of the wild hopes of social reformers, as well as a good deal of the dull conservatism of their opponents, is due to a superficial view of human life that ignores its setting in the past. You cannot deal with man just as he is, but only with man as he is, as he was, and as he may be.

> 'Society cannot be corrected radically and immediately, but only on certain points and progressively; the total reform of a social condition is neither practicable nor conceivable. Such a change can no more be operated in the moral and social than in the physiological order; its result—fatal and instant—would be death' (p. 9).

Humility is commonly regarded as a virtue peculiar to Christianity, but I doubt whether science does not inculcate it still more ruthlessly. It would be difficult, even without the interruption of their noise, to speak quite so confidently of the rights and virtues of mankind in the monkey-house of the Zoo as we can do from a political platform, amidst the plaudits of our flattered hearers. The presence of the hairy chatterers would be as insistent a call to humility as was the skull to the hermit in his cell. Men like M. Loisy have an eye on our human past while they talk of our future; they have an eye on races of men yet existent in marsh and forest-land about whom the question might almost be raised—are they really human? The

lesson is not less drastic than that of the Catholic Church on Ash Wednesday—*Memento homo quia pulvis es!*—indeed the relationship of the lowest savage and the ape is almost more humbling than an origin from mere dust which can, at least, not voice its relationship.

Thus the scientific view of humanity bestows a special character of positivism and reality on the spiritual teaching of a writer like M. Loisy. For spiritual teaching it very definitely is. Looking back to man's lowly origin, he asks what has been the guiding force of his progress; looking at man as he now is, he asks what is to be the guiding force of further advance and development. And his answer is that the transforming power throughout the process has been, as it ever will be, the moral instinct of human society.

This instinct has been at work throughout the story of mankind; dimly groping through the dark beginnings, becoming more clear and self-conscious by its progressive fulfilment.

> 'The moral conscience is not, in the historic and psychological order, something absolute. It has formed itself slowly in human societies, and is still but slightly established. It is, at bottom, a sense of humanity, a sense of society and of the needs of common life' (p. 57).

It is fundamentally religious in character.

> 'It is in this sense we may speak of a religion of humanity, or a human morality, which has been the soul of all past religions and may be destined to be the religion of the future' (p. 43).

Again:

> 'Duty is rooted in a mystic and moral sense of humanity, and only on this basis can it truly be founded' (p. 78).

Now many of those who have rejected all definitely religious belief, and have turned to the moral law as sole substitute for the same, have thought thereby to lessen the burden of human obligation. A moral law, they have thought, that was grounded, not on any other world sanction, but on human nature itself, cannot be distasteful or onerous to that same human nature.

M. Loisy does not share these pleasant illusions. He sees that the upward march of mankind has been the result of severe struggles between the brutal instincts of animal egotism and the demands of this pervasive tradition of morality. He sees that it is not by trying, as some would advocate, to be perfectly *itself*

that human society has progressed, but by trying to be something other and greater than itself. Self-development, yes—but self-development in obedience to a law of striving and self-sacrifice. The individual has to live for that society in which alone he can find his well-being, from which alone he has drawn all that makes him what he is; society has to live for the higher and unfulfilled ends in the pursuit of which, alone, its true life consists.

> 'The perfection of the individual does not consist, as some learned people have imagined, in the art of fashioning a life of enjoyment and aesthetic pleasure . . . society, on which we depend for all the amenities of life, demands, if we wish to enjoy its goods, that we should behave ourselves as our place warrants, that is to say that we should labour for the common good, in union with all those who share the same work for the same end' (p. 85).

Such are the demands of the moral conscience, in society at large, in the individual in particular.

Hence moral discipline is, for him, the highest department of education, because it is in and through his moral life that man, individually, makes or mars, accepts or repudiates his relationship to the life of humanity at large. To society he owes all that is best and noblest in his own existence, and he is under a moral obligation to repay the debt by contributing to the good and elevation of humanity, while, at the same time, and inevitably, working out his own. Thus are combined a supreme sense of individual value and a religious sense of individual subordination to the whole by which he lives, and which lives by him.

> 'Absolute individualism is a chimera in the moral, as well as in the natural, order' (p. 160).
>
> 'The individual, far from being an end to himself, has his end outside himself' (p. 161).

Not leisure and pleasure, but work and service are the highest and best things in life.

> 'Certain economists, socialists and sociologists have imagined Utopias which could not be taxed with idealism, which contained no fallacy of transcendence, and yet which were as imaginary and as little realizable as the religious Paradise of blessed immortality and eternal repose . . . They would wish, apparently, to transform mankind into well-fed flocks, and to lodge them in pleasant hygienic enclosures, full of rich pasture. But the parks are never perfect enough, and the flocks refuse to be enclosed; they are not as happy as was

expected of them; they eat the food prepared for them, but complain of its quantity and flavour; they are impatient of the labour from which they cannot be entirely exempted' (pp. 270-271).

In fact, comfort can be provided, pleasure can be purchased, but joy and happiness can only be earned.

It can be earned, according to the teaching of transcendent religions, by the service of God through man, by the service of man in God; it can be earned, according to humanistic religions, of the school of M. Loisy, by the service of humanity in general, and of humanity in particular, as concretized in country, state, and family.

'*La patrie,*' he writes, 'carries us in her arms, as we also carry her. She is not merely our collective organism . . . She is our common soul . . . the splendid and vital, spiritual and living actuation of our common efforts, aspirations and hopes. We not only work *for* our country, we also work *on* her. However humble and slender our personal contribution, we are creators of humanity' (pp. 204-205).

'Sacrifice, which would seem to be the negation of happiness, is, on the contrary, its condition and realization. It is its condition because, under one form or another, and in varying degrees, the sacrifice of the individual is necessary for the balance and preservation of society . . . It is its realization, because a voluntary sacrifice is, for him who accomplishes it, something other than torture or renunciation, or suicide . . . it is, essentially, an act of love combined with an act of faith, and, being love, it is also moral and transcendent truth, and a supreme contentment' (pp. 290-291).

We are thus, in regard to humanity, at once makers and subjects, gods and creatures, but predominantly the latter. Society is essentially a moral personality, to whose perfection we have all to contribute. Moral discipline is the most important department of education, because it is that wherein we are shaped to the service of mankind. Yet as component parts of that social Being to which we belong, we share its prerogatives and its rights. Each one of us is part and is whole; we contain society as we are contained by it. Obviously, then, each one of us owns the essential rights of the society to which we belong; if society can possess, so can each one of us possess, and the right of private property, as of family life and ownership, is in each one of us, as it is in society as a whole; limited and regulated by our relations to society.

M. Loisy, then, has no quarrel with those two great factors of human life, as we have hitherto known it, which are private property and the family, but he is at one with most Frenchmen

in his fidelity to the doctrine of *equality*, which was one main principle of the French Revolution. One doubts whether a doctrine of collective ownership and strictly State Socialism can ever get much hold of the French mind, for the reason that the Frenchman has an even more ineradicable sense of private ownership than we have. The Frenchman is *casanier*, a word of which we have no counterpart; his property and his home are the main factors of his existence. What he demands is equality of opportunity in the race of life; equality in political power; equal respect of person, whether rich or poor; equal division of social and financial burdens. He does not want to own things in common, but to have a common right of ownership; he does not resent inequality of circumstances provided that inequality be not carried over to the person.

Just as one cannot enter a mixed social gathering in England without being conscious of subtle distinctions of superiority and inferiority, so one cannot enter the same kind of gathering in France without being conscious of a pervading sense of evenness and equality.

Is there not, even, a curious analogy, in this respect, between the French theory of equality and the French language; so unlike ours in its evenly distributed accent. Ours with a rhythmical up and down, to and fro; French with its smooth, unbroken course and flow?

One is tempted to ask whether the French mind, with its native acuity, may not have thus laid hold of the soundest form of Socialism; a Socialism which is not in conflict with one of the profoundest instincts of human, as of animal, nature.

M. Loisy's teaching has, of course, a marked resemblance, on its main points, to the philosophy of Auguste Comte; though it is in no way borrowed from it. Yet while like, it is also different, because it does contain an element of transcendentalism which the great Positivist definitely repudiated.

M. Loisy's first interest in life was a religious one, so is his later, and so will, probably, be his last. He is not alone, for while our social philosophers deem that they are seeking a new economic, or social, or political order, are they not, most of them, seeking also a new religion? To look to the future, as they all do, is, in reality, to look to the transcendent, which,

alone, can be at once here, with us, in the present, and there, with us or with what comes after and remains of us, in the future. Only an animal, or a mystic, can live wholly in the present; the former because its joys, as its sorrows, lack the bond of conscious continuance (at least to so great an extent as to differentiate it from human lives), the latter, because, for him, the Eternal is ever present, and past and future are knitted together in the continuous and everlasting and ever-abiding.

But for those who point to the future as containing what the present cannot give, there is ever a conscious or unconscious faith in some abiding entity, in which alone the present can have an interest in the future, the future can have a meaning for the present. When that entity is conceived as a mere collectivity it becomes, as Mr. Bertrand Russell has said, a kind of fallacy; it has, properly, no true existence, to the welfare of which other existences should be dedicated. A State becomes a fiction, though artificially accepted as real.

When it is conceived as a kind of Being—the *Grand Être* of Auguste Comte—we are still in danger of a like fallacy, until we can assure ourselves that the conception stands for something more than all men and women of all ages, put together under one symbol.

> 'We live,' says M. Loisy, 'a great deal in the future even if we no longer risk much to live in eternity: this striving towards the future is a spiritual instinct, it is a search for reality; and when this search relaxes in individuals or in communities it is because death is near, it is because individuals and society are going to be cast amongst the waste that the river of life abandons on its brinks.' (p. 285).

Does not this striving towards the future imply a search for the transcendent; a search for life and reality; for a living basis of our faith in human nature as in all else?[2]

[2] Just as the above article was concluded I received a copy of the second edition of M. Loisy's *La Religion*, with a remarkable new preface on Mysticism. The following words are surely a confirmation of the last words of this article: *Mysticism, as essence and principle of religion, is not the revelation of a transcendent, but of a spiritual Beyond.* If M. Loisy will give me the *Beyond*, I will give him the *Transcendent.*

M.D.P.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND MEDIAEVAL SCEPTICISM

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

THE most casual reader must have noticed the recurrence of a certain type of character in Scott's mediaeval novels, a type which seems to have been described by the author with some degree of relish. In *Ivanhoe* there is the Templar, in *The Fair Maid of Perth* there is the apothecary Dwining, in *Quentin Durward* the vagabond Hayreddin, and the Grand Master in *The Talisman*. In one important respect these characters resemble one another; they all display a complete lack of belief in, and even a cynical contempt for, contemporary religious systems and moral standards.

For the Templar, popular religious beliefs are 'nursery tales,' or 'silly and fantastic prejudices.' His own sacred order is composed of 'a shoal of empty fools and crafty bigots,' and the Holy Land for which they fight is 'a barren desert, valuable only to the eyes of superstition.' Dwining is a similar mind and character in different circumstances. These render outward servility necessary, but the despised apothecary is free from all servility of the mind. His contempt for the haughty barons before whom he must cringe, and for the respectable citizens with whom he must consort, this he dissembles. But in the face of death the man is seen in his true colours, and shines with a kind of nobility. Yet his end was, to the mediaeval conscience, particularly revolting and scandalous; for he dies unconfessed and unshriven, self-poisoned, with blasphemy upon his lips.

In *Quentin Durward*, Hayreddin meets death in a similar spirit of presumptuous impiety; with startling blasphemies which shock the simple-minded Quentin, he rejects all proposals for the attendance of a priest. For him the very existence of a soul is 'a dream of priestcraft,' and his creed is that of the materialist: 'To be resolved into the elements' is his expectation after death.

> 'My hope, trust, and expectation is that the mysterious frame of humanity shall melt into the general mass of Nature, to be recom-

pounded in the other forms with which she daily supplies those which daily disappear, and return under different forms—the watery particles to streams and showers, the earthy parts to enrich their mother-earth, the airy portions to wanton in the breeze, and those of fire to supply the blaze of Aldeboran and his brethren.'

As for Giles Amaury, the Grand Master of the Templars in *The Talisman*, his freedom from every moral and religious scruple is complete. He, a priest (albeit of a military order), mocks at the Sacrament of Penance:

'Come! to this gear hastily,' says he to the unhappy Monserrat, 'since thou wilt needs go through the foolery. Hark thee. I think I know most of thy frailties by heart, so we may omit the detail, which may be somewhat long, and begin with the Absolution. What signifies counting the spots of dirt that we are about to wash from our hands?'

It might be supposed that Scott, in describing this peculiar type of mediaeval character, is guilty of an anachronism and is reading back into the 'ages of faith' the scepticism of the nineteenth century. But on the contrary it seems to be the case that these portraits are substantially historical. With regard to Brian de Bois Guilbert and Giles Amaury, Scott's chief authority, Gibbon, observes that amongst the Military Orders, 'the austerity of the convent soon evaporated in the exercise of arms, and the world was scandalized by the pride, avarice, and corruption of these Christian soldiers.' The cynical historian does not add the charge of scepticism, yet there can be very little doubt that acquaintance with the East, and intercourse with men of another religion was not without its effects upon the minds of those Crusaders who were capable of reflection. Whereas the earlier Middle Ages had possessed the very vaguest notions about religions other than Judaism and Christianity, the Crusades introduced the knowledge of a new and unfamiliar monotheistic cult. Renan goes so far as to say that:

'People reached the conclusion that there are in the world three religions, founded on analogous principles, and all mingled with fable.'[1]

No doubt Scott had in mind that strange and almost incredible leader of the Crusade in 1228, the Emperor Frederick II—'strenuous in war, skilled in languages, inflexible, voluptuous, an epicurean, caring for nought and believing in nought but the

[1] *Averroès et l'Averroïsme*, p. 280.

things of this world,'[2] who was for his contemporary, Matthew Paris, a '*stupor mundi*,' an '*immutator mirabilis*.' This Crusade indeed provided a strange spectacle even for the least thoughtful. The most cordial feelings were seen to subsist between the Emperor and the leader of the Infidels. On his visit to Jerusalem,

> 'Frederick discussed problems of mathematics and philosophy with the Mahometan *savants*, and submitted abstruse problems in the several sciences to the Sultan.' His Court in Sicily had already become 'an active centre of Arabic culture and religious indifferentism . . . . People of bad reputation flocked thither; there were astrologers from Bagdad, and Jews richly pensioned by the Emperor to translate works of Arabic science.'[3]

It should not be forgotten that the intellectual development represented by Arabian learning was, until well on in the thirteenth century, superior to that of the Christian world, which had only begun to emerge from the night of the Dark Ages. The Church, it is true, had preserved some vestiges of Roman civilisation, though Greek culture had been lost entirely in the West. It was in the East that Greek philosophy and science had survived, though often in obscure corners and in hardly recognisable forms. Nestorian Christians, banished in the fifth century from Constantinople, had carried Aristotle and even Plato into Arabia and Persia, where, under the enlightened Caliphate of the Abbassids, mathematics, physics, medicine, and philosophy were studied, in translations from the Greek, at the famous University of Bagdad. And already in the ninth century, when Europe was still plunged in the barbarism, pessimism, and despair which preceded the revival under Charlemagne, Arabian culture was experiencing its golden age.

And it was not solely through the Crusades that Western Europe was brought into contact with Arabic philosophy and science. The culture of Bagdad travelled through the Mohammedan world to Spain, then under the dominion of the Moors. At Cordova, Aristotle was translated from Arabic (the learned language of the East) into Latin (the learned language of the West), and carried to the University of Paris. Thus the great encyclopaedist of the ancient world was re-introduced into a Europe which had forgotten him.

[2] Quoted, from the *Liber Augustalis*, by Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 203.

[3] Renan, *op. cit.*, pp. 287 f.

The Arabian commentators upon Aristotle, of whom the most famous was Averroes, had emphasised precisely those aspects of his teaching which were least compatible with Christianity, *i.e.* the doctrine of the eternity of matter, and the denial of individual immortality. The result was an outbreak of speculative thought of a far bolder kind than anything that had been known in Europe for many centuries. In the earlier years of the thirteenth century Paris became the scene of 'an outburst of free thought'; and the disciples of a certain Almaric of Bena, a theological doctor of Paris, were accused of pantheism and other heresy, and condemned to the stake or to prison.[4] The works of Aristotle in consequence came in for some measure of ecclesiastical censure, but the suspected books continued to be used, and were, in 1254, actually prescribed by the University authorities for use in the schools.

Some of the opinions condemned at Paris during the course of the century indicate the lengths to which speculation was prepared to go. Among the two hundred and nineteen propositions condemned in 1277 were not only the denial of the Trinity, of the Immortality of the Soul, and of the Creation, but also the startling heresies: that theological discourses are based on fables; that there are fables and falsities in the Christian doctrine (*lex*) just as there are in all other religious doctrines; that Christian doctrine is a barrier to learning, and so forth.[5]

The vigorous exertions of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities no doubt kept these opinions in check. Above all the establishment of the Inquisition by Pope Innocent IV in 1248, wherever it got a firm hold, placed mediaeval orthodoxy beyond the reach of open attack for another three centuries. Yet 'Averroistic free-thought smouldered on in a more disguised and more speculative form, occasionally bursting forth into a short-lived flame which called for ecclesiastical extinction.'[6]

Italy, as well as France seems to have been involved in a movement of thought which we find it difficult to associate with customary ideas of the Middle Ages. A sect of Epicureans

[5] See Rashdall, *loc. cit.*, p. 362, and Renan, p. 274.
[4] See Rashdall, *Mediaeval Universities*, vol. i, p. 355.
[6] Rashdall, *vol.* I, p. 361.

caused sanguinary disturbances at Florence as early as 1115, and it was customary at an early date to charge political opponents with materialism and atheism. The charges may not have been true, but the fact that they were made indicated that these were more or less familiar notions, even in the 'ages of faith.' The great mediaeval medical school at Padua was a hot-bed of rationalistic incredulity. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, medicine, Averroism, astrology, incredulity, became almost interchangeable terms.

In view of these facts, we cannot regard Dwining, who studied 'in Spain and Arabia' as merely a mythical anachronism. He may very well have existed, and it is perhaps not too much to say that his type was a common one. Such persons did not necessarily come into conflict with the authorities, as they had their uses in the community, and were generally (we may suspect) too prudent to obtrude their views where they were not likely to prove congenial. For it is not the sceptics in religion who cause trouble to the authorities, but rather those who strongly hold religious views which conflict with the interests of a dominant church. The ecclesiastical authorities at every period have regarded the atheist as less dangerous than the heretic, and from their own point of view, they have been right.

In some important respects, perhaps, the picture of the Middle Ages presented by the novels of Scott may reflect the ideals and fancies of the great Romanticist rather than give an accurate picture of the facts of history. Literary realism had not yet come into fashion when the Waverley Novels were first published. Yet the mediaeval novels do present a lively picture, and one which only a careful student of history could have drawn. And the particular piece of detail which has engaged our attention—the inclusion in the picture of these rather sinister exponents of moral and religious scepticism—should heighten our esteem for the artist; for it might so very easily have been omitted. As it is, the presence of these apparently alien elements not only enlivens Scott's pages, but also makes them more historical. And if it be only the few who take them seriously, it should be remembered that it is only the few who understand the past.

THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF DEATH

By the Rev. John Gamble, B.D., Canon Residentiary of Bristol Cathedral.

THE question of what follows death is one of great and abiding interest. We cannot shut it out. Thought is as busy on the subject to-day as ever it was before. The bereavements of the Great War have given it fresh urgency. There is a widespread tendency to believe that the dead can be seen or spoken to, or that the gulf between them and the living may possibly be bridged over by scientific discoveries.

Yet the pulpit treatment of the subject is I fear often unsatisfying. It seems too often as if the clergy were paying formal homage to beliefs which they have ceased to hold. No real attempt is made to answer the actual questions in men's minds. We seem, while we listen, to be dealing with by-gone beliefs. It is as if we were reading old letters, or looking at the dresses of a hundred years ago. A feeling of unreality settles upon us and we lose interest.

In all our thoughts on the subject everything depends on the starting-point. The only safe course is to start from our present experience, what we actually feel and know, and to regard this as a prophecy of what is yet to come. It is of no avail to begin with conjectures and imaginations, for if we do we are only walking on shifting sands.

Of one thing we may feel certain. The life eternal, whatever form it may assume hereafter, must begin now. It is something of which we have or may have at present actual experience. What we hope for is the continuance of something which has even now begun. It is a fire, perhaps only a spark, a beam in darkness, which we hope will grow. This is I believe implied in every New Testament passage where the life eternal is mentioned. Thus our starting point must be this divine fire which even now is to be found burning within the soul.

Let me then for the sake of clearness put my guiding principle into the form of this single assertion. We strengthen the hope of immortality, not by straining our imaginations to picture a future existence, but by strengthening the religious con-

sciousness, invigorating the soul, so that death shall for us cease to count, and we be lifted above it and be able to treat it as we do any other necessary and inevitable change.

We thus begin with what now is, instead of reversing the process and beginning with what we desire but have not yet got. We cannot possibly make future existence more life-like by the aid of the imagination. For our imaginations are dependent upon what we call local colour. And local colour is precisely what we cannot have in the case of an existence independent of the body and its organs. The imagination has nothing here of which it can lay hold. There is no familiar sight or sound, no suggestive taste or odour to stir the memory and give us the feeling of home in a strange place.

If on the other hand we have in this life gained such confidence in God, that death has become like the sleep of a child, or like the passing into another room in God's great world, then this confidence is itself an assurance that God will never leave us, that as He lives we shall live also. We ask no questions, we make no bargains. We are well content to leave the future in the hands of one who has given us good reason to trust Him.

This is the highest teaching on the subject of a future life known to me. It was thus our Lord spoke to His disciples in those supper-room conversations which stand out in our minds as of quite exceptional value. He tells them here how they are to think of death,—His death and theirs, how the gulf between Him and them can be crossed, when He has passed from the earth, and left them still living upon it: we must suppose them to have had in their minds that blessed life of which He had spoken so often, the heaven where He had bidden them place their treasure, the Kingdom of God where they would dwell in safety.

Nothing would have been easier than to paint in glowing colours that spiritual existence upon which He was now to enter and into which they in their turn would follow Him. This, however, is not at all what He does. Instead of appealing to the imagination of the disciples He strengthens their souls by telling them of a happiness which is now within their reach, a spiritual Presence of His which they may actually know and feel, and which will give them on this side of the grave the

blessedness they have been perhaps restricting to a life beyond the tomb.

I am not putting any fanciful interpretation of my own upon these chapters in the Fourth Gospel when I say that the heaven of which they speak, although it reaches beyond death, does none the less begin in this world. It must so begin if we are ever to know what it is. The house of many mansions is not a palace in some distant world. It is a spiritual home open to all who love Jesus and keep His sayings. He does not leave them desolate. He and the Father come to them, taking up their abode with Him, and releasing them from doubts and fears.

Such is the heaven of these sublime chapters. If we would recognize it we must think, not of streets of gold or gates of pearl, rivers clear as crystal or trees laden with fruit, but of a disciple of Jesus, perhaps in poverty and suffering, who lifts up a contrite and yet a trustful heart to a Father, unseen and yet closely near. There is the heaven of these chapters. There Jesus and the Father have come and made their abode. The disciple is not desolate or homeless. He is with Jesus and Jesus with him. He occupies the place Jesus has prepared for him in the Father's house.

Shall we say that this is a poor substitute for the unclouded existence for which we have been taught to hope? I would answer that it possesses a certainty which belongs to no other conception of heaven, that it has credentials which no other can claim. It does not attempt to bring within the reach of the senses what is of necessity beyond them. What it does do is to lift our minds above considerations of time and space and to convince us that our happiness must proceed, not from length of days or from our situation, but from the lantern of the spirit which colours the whole prospect with its own light. This is a truth of which we have daily experience. We carry our happiness or misery with us. We do not derive them from the situation in which we happen to be. If we have the sources of happiness within us we shall be happy anywhere. If we have not we shall be happy nowhere. Thus when we read here that the disciple of Jesus is with Jesus where He is, we must not suppose this to mean that the disciple and his Master are in the same place. What is meant is that the two are spiritually united so that they form as it were one person and not two. It is a

spiritual likeness and not bodily proximity which unites them. The same truth is presented in the Ascensiontide Collect where we pray that we may ascend in heart and mind into the heavens, even as we believe our Lord to have so ascended, meaning of course not a local ascension after death, but a present uprising of the spirit into the eternal world. So in the Collect for the Sunday following, the place to which we pray that we may be exalted, is not a local heaven, but an identification of ourselves with Christ so that He dwells in us and we in Him.

Now in as far as we are thus able to think and feel, in so far will death for us have ceased to count. We shall not think of death as an irreparable calamity, but as a falling asleep within God's arms, a passing from one room to another in His great house.

This is how we are taught to think of it in the Gospel story in which we are led up to the tomb and bidden to come and see what it contains. The entire narrative of the raising of Lazarus is intended to show that while the disciple of Jesus goes the way of all flesh, spiritually he never dies. His sickness is not in this sense a sickness unto death. He never tasted the sense of separation from God which is the sting of death. In this dread form he that believes on Jesus does not die. Thus death has not touched that eternal life which Lazarus has always possessed and which was still his even while his body lay in the tomb. Even then he was among those of whom Jesus spoke when He said: 'He that believeth on Me shall never die.' The death of Lazarus was only a falling asleep, 'Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep.'

I do not say that it is possible for us all in equal measure, or for any of us at all times to feel that death does not count. The experience, I know, admits of all degrees of strength. Some may have it habitually. To others it may come only at rare moments. Nor would I make light of bereavement, the sharp sense of loss when the loved one has died. I would only ask whether there is any consolation so great at such seasons as the thought that spiritual life is independent of the body, that it seems to partake of God's own eternity, and that it thus constitutes a bond between the dead and the living, so that they and we are felt to be dwelling in separate rooms indeed, but in the same great house of the Father.

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF MAN[1]

By the Rev. J. F. Bethune-Baker, D.D., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge.

We are God's fellow-workers.—I *Cor.* iii, 9.
Fellow-workers with the truth.—III *John* v, 8.
The glorious liberty of the children of God.—*Rom.* viii, 21.

I WANT to speak to-day of the Christian doctrine of Man and to invite the Churchmen's Union to a new crusade to rescue it from the *débris* of Jewish and pagan conceptions by which from the very beginning it has been obscured.

But first, as I am not a member of your Union though in close fellowship of the spirit with you, I want to express the profound gratitude that is due to your Union for the services it has rendered to the truth. You are the only Church Society that puts truth in the forefront of its programme. You put it above 'old custom,' old tradition, old beliefs. You obviously trust in the immortal promise that the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of His Father—the very Spirit of Truth—shall guide His disciples—all who will learn of Him—age after age along the way of truth. And while you believe that the eternal Logos of God, which is the light that has always lighted every man, was supremely manifest in Christ; you do not think that this birth-privilege of men was lost from the moment when He came into the world, nor do you claim—as the Church has seemed to claim—a monopoly of divine enlightenment ever after for the organized Society of Christians. The Incarnation, you are sure, did not limit the activities of the Spirit of God to the narrow confines of the Church. So wherever new knowledge comes, in every department of human experience and activity, you are ready to welcome it as the gift of the Spirit of Truth, and to revise every belief and every judgment of the past that is in any way discordant with the new knowledge that is at once both 'given' and 'won.' And this you do knowing

[1] A Sermon preached in St. Andrew's Church, Westminster, on May 27th, 1924, at the Corporate Celebration of the Holy Communion of the Churchmen's Union.

what it is you do, with a loyalty that passes the understanding of many who are loyal in other ways to Him who called Himself as Tertullian said, 'not ancient custom, but Truth.'

And you can do it—how strange it is that it needs to be said!—you can do it within the Church of England. Ecclesiastical authorities whose business it is to keep things as they are may cold-shoulder you; the pulpits of the land may ring for a season with denunciations of you, for alas! the people who know better are seldom found in congregations to cry 'shame!' You might almost think you were living where the writ of the Vatican Council ran.

Historical memories are short. Let me recall the decree of the Vatican Council of some fifty years ago:

> 'If anyone shall say that it is possible, that from time to time in the course of the progress of science an interpretation may have to be attributed to dogmas proposed by the Church other than that which has been and is understood by the Church: let him be accursed.'

There speaks the authentic voice of Rome. So Rome must speak when the Vatican Council meets again next year.

But it is not the voice of England. An English bishop may write in *The Times* and say we have many doctrines in common with Rome, and must not raise again the 'No Popery' cry. But it is certain that in one form or other that cry will always be raised in England when changes in our Services are proposed that would re-introduce or suggest and encourage a doctrine that was rejected at the Reformation, not because it was Roman, but because it was untrue.

It was not for nothing that the fires of Smithfield burnt. And Latimer's words to Ridley, 'We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out,' express, I am convinced, the mind of England as truly to-day as they did at that dark moment in our history when they were uttered. The spirit of reformation has ever since had its home in the Church of England, the spirit that is sensitive to new learning and new conditions and ever finding those new interpretations of 'dogmas proposed by the Church' that the Vatican abhors.

From time to time we have our crises. There was one ten years ago, when a sudden attack was made on 'the critical

school,' the students and scholars who can never be counted in more than tens. Thousands were marshalled against them. The Churchmen's Union played its part, and the freedom needed at the moment was securely won: freedom to investigate the origins and history of our religion, freedom to question traditional views and ignore the literal sense of old beliefs and formulas and affirm them in their meaning for religion to-day; freedom to speak out and in the name of the Christian religion repudiate ideas that the Church had held as the framework of its faith, when those ideas have become irrational and immoral. I say 'become' irrational and immoral, because in my judgment those terms are always relative. They always have in view a standard, and in these matters the standard must be the best knowledge and the highest ethical sense of any particular age; and judged by the standards of to-day, alike in knowledge of the universe and the story of man's emergence and place in it (learned as it were but yesterday) and in far finer sensitiveness to the ethical ideals of Christ and their bearing on human life both individual and social, there is much in our traditional conceptions of God and Man that is irrational and immoral.

We cannot expect our presentation of the truth to be free from the myth and imagery and picture-thinking and all the analogies drawn from the very experience out of which the truth has been reached. These myths and pictures are still, I suppose always will be, for many the nearest representation of the truth. But we cannot ask less than Plato demanded for the youth of his Republic: that ancient myths which suggest unworthy ideas of God should be discarded and those only retained which are *like* the truth. Dr. J. M. Wilson, one of your veterans, has just been pleading for reforms on these lines in our religious teaching of the young; and they are long overdue. Many apologists of late have set their hands to restatement of the Christian doctrine of God, but nearly always I seem to see the old ideas dressed up again: and I believe another way of approach must be tried. I despair of reaching a true doctrine of God along the lines that the Church has followed in its traditional system of dogma. Orthodox Christology blocks the way, with its hopeless dichotomy of the human and the divine in the very Person in whom we believe they were mani-

festly one. We have not yet learned the meaning of the Incarnation, which is our central belief.

Dr. Gore, one of the noblest and most persuasive exponents of some convictions that all Christians share, and the most competent apologist of lost theological causes that I know, in reviewing Dr. Raven's *Apollinarianism* insists that the distinctness of nature between Godhead and manhood is 'the basis which our Lord's language about God and man assumes'; and with the same intention he writes of 'the foundation of Israel on which the Church is built'; as if the Church of Christ, the Israel of God, was pledged to the Jew's conception of God. I do not like Dr. Gore's inanimate metaphors with all the fixity they imply, when we are dealing with living human hearts and minds and the religious interpretation of live human experience. They do not correspond with anything we know of the processes of life and personality in any of its manifestations and expressions which we can observe.

No doubt 'the man Jesus' had the roots of his being far back in his remotest ancestor. His ideas of God had nearer roots in some of the prophets and psalmists of Israel. He was, of course, the product of the past. But like all other children born into the world, He was something new, different from all others that had ever been or would be; and from the moment of His birth He was drawing in from His whole environment, acting on it and reacting to it. His experience was His very own, and the outcome of that experience, as He told it and showed it, was a new doctrine of God and Man. It was not the old Jewish doctrine. It was a new growth. Our metaphors must not be architectural, but biological, and only *epigenesis* will describe the facts. It is not a case of adding a coping-stone to a venerable pile, nor of mere evolution, but the emergence out of new experience of something gloriously new, creature and creator.

I cannot think that Dr. Gore is right. The Jews of the Fourth Gospel, whether they were our Lord's contemporaries or of the next generation, had I believe a truer appreciation of the facts. Marcion may have gone too far, or St. Paul not far enough. It may be a question whether our Lord Himself quite understood or gave full expression to the content and

implications of His experience, or whether His reporters fell short in their reports. But this is certain. The horror of 'the Jews' at His calling God His Father in a really personal sense (for that is how we should render the words in English to-day) shows plainly that they understood His conception of God and man to be radically different from their own.

It is just here that the contribution He brought to the religious interpretation of life has all the newness, the 'otherness' if you like, that makes it a 'revelation'—first of all, as in His great Thanksgiving (*Mt.* xi, 25 *ff*, and *Lk.* x, 21 *f*) He tells us it was, to Himself and then through Him to us. And I can attach no meaning to this metaphor, this human analogy, of the Fatherhood of God; this personal Fatherhood and Sonship, 'my Father and your Father,' 'Father,' the new name which men are to use of God; unless it connotes, not distinctness but community of nature between Godhead and manhood. And if the Jews of the Fourth Gospel could not believe it at all, and the Church has built up a stately edifice of doctrine on 'the foundation of Israel,' yet in prayer and sacrament it has surpassed its creed and left ways open by which in defiance of dogma men might for the moment bridge the pre-supposed chasm of nature between themselves and God.

We commonly speak of the doctrine of the Incarnation as our interpretation of the *Person* of our Lord. We should do better to say of His *experience*, and to go further still and add the experience of others who were brought into contact with Him—the personal experience of which He was the subject and the much wider experience of which He was the creator and the centre.

Our exploitation of this doctrine in the past has been far too one-sided. We have not had the courage of our conviction that in this experience we have a true revelation of the relation existing not only between the man Jesus and God, but *therefore* from the beginning between all men and God. The experience of Jesus answered all the old logicians' questions, *An sit*, *quid sit*, *quale sit*. The doctrinal system of the Church denied that the answers were true of man as man. It has Judaized, and Platonized, and Stoicized, and Aristotelianized in turn; and now willy-nilly it must Evolutionize. And the wonder is that

when it does this it begins to Christianize, and the alienated world of to-day will listen again to the Church when it sets before it this doctrine of Man implicit in the experience of Jesus.

For all that we know to-day of the constitution of the universe, of the whole realm of Nature, of the processes that have been and are in operation, of all the history of the World and Man, obliges us either to leave God out of account, or else to see Him in the whole evolutionary process, with Man as fellow-worker with Him and the higher stages of the process, which begin with man's appearance on the scene, as much dependent on Man as on God. 'We are God's fellow-workers'—we are partners with Him in the whole business of life, in the whole process of the world.

Some years ago we were urged to give up our phrase 'Incarnation' as a pagan conception. But that is not our way. Phrases, ideograms, are not like wine-skins. More and more with growing knowledge we fill our Christian ideograms with new content and they bear the pressure, and again and again we find that an old 'formula' has a far wider application and a deeper verification than those who used it in the past could know. We talk less glibly of 'dead' matter than our fathers did. And more and more I am sure it will be found that 'Incarnation' is the term that best expresses for us the truth about the world and Man. It is all Incarnation: a process, from the beginning, if beginning there was, to the end, if end there be. But I am keeping you too long.

My appeal to you is this. In the past the Church has limited its doctrine of Incarnation to its interpretation of one historical experience, an experience which marked the culmination of one stage in the evolution of Man and the beginning of a new era. For Jesus was the Supreme Idealist, and wherever His Spirit has had free course it has been impossible for anyone to think of God or of Man or of human society as men thought before. The Church has been the guardian of a great Revelation, but it has used it almost exclusively for its doctrine of God. Yet the one certain fact is that Jesus was a man, and of course the doctrine of the Church has preserved this fact. But it has never yet used it in its doctrine of Man. It has isolated 'the man

Jesus' from His place in the historic evolutionary process. 'My Father worketh hitherto and I work.' Oh, there is evidence enough of other interpretations before we entered the prison house of Latinized and world-denying Christianity.

It is irrational to-day to use your Incarnation only for your doctrine of God, and not for your doctrine of Man. The God-Man is a revelation of Everyman as well as of God, and your doctrine of Everyman must be derived from what He was.

So my appeal to the Churchmen's Union is to put in the forefront of its programme the attempt to state for the first time a doctrine of Man consistent—I may not say with the Church's doctrine of the Incarnation, but with the conviction that the truth about Man is disclosed in Jesus Christ no less than the truth about God. So at last we may have a 'Christian' doctrine of Man by which Man to-day may be redeemed.

BOOK REVIEWS

RELIGION AND NATURAL LAW[1]

The starting point of all true theology must necessarily be man's experience of God. When a man has had so profound a religious experience that he feels that he must share it with his fellow-men, he is obliged by the necessity of the case to try to express his experience as best he can in the language at his command. Language is at best an imperfect instrument for communicating religious experience, or indeed any profound and deeply moving experience whatever—as every lover knows. And always a man's language reflects the knowledge and thought-forms of his day, and however new and unique his experience, and his message to his fellows, may seem to him to be, he cannot begin to make it possible for them to understand and share it unless he can express it in the familiar forms which alone they can grasp.

This simple truth is often forgotten, and forgotten with results disastrous in two directions. It is forgotten, in the first place, by many of those who in their expositions of the messages that have come down to us in the ancient sacred writings, too often persist in reading back into these writings the meanings which they could only have if they had been written to-day. 'The plain meaning of the words is this,' such an one may say, 'either you must believe that the writer meant what he said, or you must conclude that he was a liar.' But of course over and over again the dilemma is a false one. It would only be true if it were put in this form, 'If these words had been written to-day, and according to the accepted rules and standards of to-day (if, that is to say, the language was the language of a modern cultivated person), we should be forced

[1] *Religion and Natural Law.* Hulsean Lectures, 1922–3. By C. F. Russell. (Blackwell; 5/-.)

to conclude that he meant so and so or that he was a liar.' The same truth is forgotten again by all those who think that you can teach traditional truth simply by repeating traditional language and that if only you can get a large number of people making the same verbal affirmations you can be certain that, however varied their education may be, they all mean the same thing.

It follows from all this that if we are rightly to understand any ancient writings we must not be content with taking the records at their face value, we must seek to get behind the language to the experience which gave it birth, and that we can only do this by making the most careful attempt to get at the *welt-anschauung* of those who had the experience, which the writings attempt to record.

It follows also that if we are to bring home to the minds of present-day folk the eternal and vital truths which have come down to us from the far past, we must translate them into the language of to-day, and bring them into harmony with the habitual thought-modes of our hearers. This, if the thing we wish to teach is really an eternal truth—and the business of religious teachers is with nothing else—must necessarily be possible, though equally of necessity it can never be easy. It can only be adequately done by one who is fitted by knowledge and insight to discriminate between what is eternally true and what belongs to an obsolete way of thinking, by one who is at the same time abreast of the new knowledge and thought of his own day.

Too often the religious teachers of to-day brought up in the classical tradition, cut off by their very profession with its distinctive dress, from the common life of their fellow-men, remain in astonishing ignorance of the process which is continually at work in the world about them, that slow but inevitable permeation of the teaching and mode of thinking of the great body of men of science through wider and wider circles of human society. Dimly aware of what is going on all round them they are filled with vague fears and, failing to see any need for a change in themselves, they thunder against a rising tide of knowledge and conviction which they have not begun to understand.

It is, we fear, vain to hope that men whose minds are of this type will do other than condemn off-hand Mr. Russell's admirable and sincere little book. It will seem to them only another 'compendium of all the heresies.' Its very freshness of thought, and the shining sincerity of its author, will only make the book seem more dangerous in their eyes.

But on the other hand all who prefer realities to shams, and earnest thought presented in a clear and cogent form to the stale reiteration of what passes for orthodoxy will welcome this book; and above all they will welcome it because it will help them to win for the Christian Faith those multitudes of eager-minded young folk who simply will not come into a Church which seems to them to be out of touch with reality. Mr. Russell deals with four or five of the great doctrines of Christianity, the doctrine of the Trinity (which he unexpectedly, but none the less convincingly claims to be 'the charter of the right of free investigation,' the doctrine of Providence, the doctrines of Punishment and Forgiveness, taken together, and the Doctrine of Atonement and the Problem of Suffering.

Summarily stated, Mr. Russell's argument is this. The observation of external Nature teaches us something of God; History (including the central figure of all history, Jesus) teaches us more; and 'the inner spiritual life of man, the processes of his reason, his efforts to understand

and harmonize his manifold experience—these present to him a new set of ideals and so bring him once more into relation with the principle of all life and being.'

But since God is one there can be no ultimate contradiction between what we learn of him in one way and what we learn of him in another. Therefore if we use each of these three methods of approach the results must ultimately harmonize with one another. We have not space to do justice to Mr. Russell's plea that this three-foldness in approach to God is to be rightly regarded as the human side of the relationship to God which, on its Divine side, is formulated for us in the doctrine of the Trinity.

In his second lecture Mr. Russell examines current notions of the working of Divine Providence. While he is rightly critical of these he holds that there is a valuable truth to be conserved, *viz.* that the world is so ordered as to make in the long run for the highest welfare of free, rational beings. This would plainly not be the case if the universe were not governed by universal law, discoverable by the human mind. There could be no freedom in a haphazard world. But the idea of a God who is constantly intervening between man's ignorances and follies and their natural consequences would be such a world. And it is this kind of world which popular superstition about 'an inscrutable Providence' really postulates. As it is, Nature, History, and Reason, all bear witness to law and to the fact that man's freedom ultimately depends upon his discovery of and glad submission to law.

In his third lecture Mr. Russell proceeds to expound the real nature of the Divine Law, which is discovered not in arbitrary enactments but in inevitable sequences. So, he argues, God's punishments are not, as is so commonly supposed, arbitrary impositions, as the punishments meted out in a human Court of Law are, but are the strictly inevitable and appropriate consequences of man's failures to recognize and submit to the laws by which life is governed. He points out very cogently the double-edged character of law. The very laws which make disaster possible (and understandable) are those which make possible at the same time man's highest joys and blessings. God's punishments are educative.

So finally he comes to the Atonement and here his doctrine is in complete harmony with all his previous teaching. In common with the vast majority of modern thinkers, certainly with all who have grasped the scientific view of life, he will have nothing of vicarious punishment. If God's punishments are the natural, appropriate, and inevitable consequences of sin it is of course impossible to mantain that our Lord suffered those consequences. The inevitable consequence of certain sins is physical disease of a certain kind. Again ignorance is the result of (and divine punishment for) intellectual sloth. No one maintains that Christ suffered from disease or from ignorance in our stead.

But if life gives us no instance of vicarious punishment it gives us innumerable instances of vicarious suffering which is quite a different thing, and we know the redemptive power of vicarious suffering, courageously born for love's sake. So our Lord's death on the Cross for our sake cannot and does not mean that we are to be let off punishment, but that, moved by the realization of the love of God and the result of our sin, and enabled by the Divine forgiveness—reconciled to God—we bear the results and even use them for the furtherance of the divine plan. Mr. Russell claims, and we think rightly claims, that his view, while not contradicting Abelard's view of the Atonement, does definitely enlarge

it. It is his strong grasp of Natural Law which makes this enlargement possible and indeed inevitable.

We hope that in our attempt to summarize an already closely condensed argument we have done Mr. Russell no injustice. We cannot conceive of a better book to put into the hands of a thoughtful enquirer of either sex.

C. H. S. M.

ENGLISH RELIGIOUS THOUGHT[1]

The lectures collected in this little volume deal with matters of vital importance. In the first four[2] Professor Webb, in surveying the movements of religious thought in England during the past hundred years, shows their general, if unconscious, reflection of the main currents of European thought. This method we feel to be more valuable in helping us to attain a true perspective, than the more frequent attempts to estimate the extent and significance of such changes as have actually taken place.

In the three admirable lectures which follow, on *Morality and Religion*, Professor Webb distinguishes these two forms of spiritual experience and elaborates the nature of their inter-relations. He dissents alike from the view which subordinates Religion to Morality—'Morality touched by emotion' as Matthew Arnold superficially defined it—as from the opposite view which subordinates Morality to Religion, as, for example, in Paley's doctrine that virtue is 'the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God and for the sake of everlasting happiness,' which is hardly religious at all. Professor Webb writes, 'I am convinced that no view which does not recognise the distinctness and relative independence of Morality and Religion will be found in the long run to be satisfactory.' He supports this contention from human experience, by convincing illustrations from history, and by philosophical consideration of the nature of Morality and Religion. Religion is always an attempt to get into relation with 'the mysterious power at the heart of things' and therefore involves, when reflection is sufficiently advanced, a theory of the world and life as a whole. This Morality, apart from Religion, is not. Both are thoroughly social and their relations are so intimate (though not in the most primitive stages of human development) that they have often been confounded with one another. Despite continual interaction 'in the later stages of spiritual evolution the development of Morality by no means proceeds *pari passu* with that of Religion.' The warnings of Jewish prophets and Greek philosophers reveal Religion as lagging behind Morality. The conservatism of Religion makes religious men slow to believe that the gods no longer require the services they have been accustomed to render, or that stories about them are unworthy of an advancing Morality, even when the services and stories are in flagrant disagreement with their own moral judgments. In our own time 'the moral consciousness of Christians emancipated by the advance of Biblical criticism has indeed thrown itself into the criticism of a great part of Christian tradition'—a remark which recalls our author's warning in another lecture in this volume, that the revolutionary extent of our changed view of Scriptural authority has at present been but dimly recognised. He indicates his own consciousness of the implications when he says that 'it would indeed be quite contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity' for anything to be withdrawn from the

[1] *A Century of Anglican Theology and Other Lectures.* By CLEMENT C. J. WEBB, M.A., Hon. LL.D., Oriel Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion in the University of Oxford. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell; 5/- net.)

[2] Published in the *Modern Churchman*, Vol. XII, Nos. 8–11.

criticism of the moral conscience. And therefore, we would add, from the Reason. But Religion has its part to play in transforming our regard for the Moral Law into a sentiment of love for its Divine Author. Religion is needed to inspire the strivings of Morality towards the ideal 'with the hope and confidence which can only come from the consciousness in Religion of intercourse with a real Supreme Goodness in which the values we are endeavouring to attain are actually secure.' Religion supplies Morality with an inspiration it would otherwise lack. Professor Webb has some illuminating things to say in showing that the doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins is not inconsistent with the Moral Law as it at first appears to be.

There is also an excellent lecture on *Theology as the Science of Religious Experience*. It is perhaps a little unfortunate that the familiar but vague term 'Religious Experience' is not defined more closely than Professor Webb has here defined it. He tells us that the term is used in the sense of believing that in Religion we are 'aware of an independent Reality which is made known to us through the actions and emotions of worship, prayer, meditation, and so forth, no less truly than the material things around us become known to us through our sensations . . .' This is excellent, but something more is needed in the direction of delimitation of the possible *content* of such experience. We are not unfamiliar with the device by which admittedly disputable historical events are guaranteed by 'religious experience' dating from a time when the supposed events were not admittedly disputable. And indeed Professor Webb gives some instances of the way in which Theology as the science of Religious Experience might be applied in detail. If the Christian's experience is that of 'a mediate sonship to God,' a sonship which is his 'not in his own right but by the free grace of Another who is the Son of God in his own right,' this experience is bound up with the acceptance of certain events as historical and not mytholigical, which in turn implies rational and moral judgments in the background. If we feel that this cannot be emphasized too strongly, it must not be supposed that we are suggesting that Professor Webb is not fully aware of it. He compares and contrasts the Religious Experience with the Experience of Beauty noting the all-important difference, that whereas in the latter the question what the object of our experience may be outside or apart from the experience itself is of no great interest to us, in the former the same question is of vital importance to us. In Religious Experience we feel ourselves in contact with the Reality of things and we cannot rest till we know the relation of our Experience to the Object; uncertainty as to the separate existence of that Object often destroys our joy and peace in believing. Professor Webb does not ignore the differences in the sense in which the word 'science' can be applied to Theology as compared with its usual significations. The 'personal equation' discounted in Natural Sciences is the essential factor in Theology as the Science of Religious Experience. His view of Theology in this sense is in disagreement with that which is concerned with deductions from authoritative statements of inspired persons or contained in inspired writings. This procedure is justified at certain stages, but becomes a hindrance to progress when the authorities quoted are not allowed to be brought to the tests which fresh observation and experiments may afford. The large place of Tradition in Theology is due to the social character of Religion and also that the Religious Experience in a society is usually originated by the activity of some exceptional personage; and hence the prominence of *Revelation*. But it is a wholly false view of Revelation to regard it

in contrast to Reason and Conscience as an entirely different source of information about divine things, as though the place taken in other branches of knowledge by self-evident principles, should be occupied in Theology by authoritative pronouncements beyond criticism or reformulation. J. S. B.

IRISH SAINTS IN EUROPE (600 A.D.—1000 A.D.).[1]

A just pride in the bygone intellectual conquests of Ireland had, we imagine, a good deal to do with the appearance of this translation. An informal dedication occurs in the author's introduction: 'God grant that the Gaels of to-day—the Gaels of the motherland and the unnumbered exiles of the Irish *diaspora*—may draw both example and hope from their glorious national history.'

The debt, religious and literary, that Europe owes to Ireland is often forgotten—except by Irishmen. There was in the ninth century a certain Hincmar the Younger, a bishop and a nephew of the famous Archbishop of Rheims, who was by way of founding a literary coterie the members of which were to converse in the Greek tongue, and who prided himself upon his ability *to speak Irish!*

The exodus of saints and scholars from Ireland to the Continent during the eighth century is in fact one of the most remarkable movements in the history of the intellectual life of Western Europe. There had been Celtic missionaries to Gaul and Germany long before—the famous St. Columban (*ob.* 615); St. Gall, of whom still flourish memories around the celebrated monastery which once was 'the intellectual centre of the German world'; St. Fursa and the *Peregrini minores;* the *episcopi vagantes,* wandering bishops with no diocese who provoked St. Boniface to wrath; monks, pilgrims and sham clerics. But in 795 the Vikings first appeared off the eastern coasts of Ireland, ravaged the country, slaughtered the monks, and sacked the monasteries, including the three great literary centres of Clonard, Clonfert and Clonmacnois. Thence onwards subsequent inroads of the barbarian set flowing a stream of saintly and learned Irish clerics to the Continent bearing precious MSS. as their only luggage. It was the time of the Carolingian Revival, and merely to recall the names of these exiled *Scotti* who under Charles the Great and his successors shared in the educational and ecclesiastical renascence of that age is to gain a juster estimate than is common of the important *rôle* played by Celtic influence in the early Middle Ages. Colonies of these *Scotti* arose in many of the towns familiar to our day through more martial associations—Rheims, Soissons, Liége, Cambrai. At Laon there flourished as master of the palace-school of Charles the Bald the most famous of the *Scotti* and the one who, next to Alcuin himself, exercised the greatest influence in Carolingian France—John Scottus Erigena. It was at Laon that Hincmar attempted to talk Greek and it was the Irish *Scotti* who persuaded him thereto, much to the disgust of his uncle the Archbishop, who felt his nephew had better learn to speak his own language properly. Certainly the earliest pioneers of the days of Columban, two centuries before, with their 'small Latin and less Greek' would not have offended the great man in this particular. Whether, indeed, much Greek was taught in the average Irish monastery of the seventh and eighth centuries is a doubtful point, to the elucidation of which the author devotes one of his short

[1] *Gallic Pioneers of Christianity.* By Dom Louis Gougaud, O.S.B. Translated by Victor Collins, with a Preface by Fr. Augustin, O.S.F.C. (M. H. Gill and Son, Dublin; 7/6 net.)

chapters. There was work to be done greater even than the preservation amid universal barbarism of the deposit of sacred and classical learning. In truth, 'the great founders of the Irish schools were saints and their scholars were monks.' Scholars and monks 'live' because they were also missionaries carrying in their breasts the authentic and perennial passion of the heralds of the Cross. They were men 'wandering for the Lord'; as they wrote, they left the 'sweet earth of their native land for the love of God,' 'for the name of the Lord'; they were 'of Christ enamoured wholly.' They were men in whom sanctity and scholarship went hand in hand. There were modernists even in those 'Dark Ages.' Such an one was Virgil the Geometer, Abbot of Aghaboe in Ireland, who went into exile 'for the love of Christ' and lived to become Abbot of St. Peter's, Salzburg, whose cosmological theories seem to have shocked St. Boniface. Virgil, despite his liberalism, lived long enough to receive episcopal consecration, longevity being then as doubtless it still is, a necessity for any modernist who would be a bishop. From about 1000 A.D. the fervour cooled. The camp-followers of the devoted army of missionary enthusiasts, the flotsam and jetsam of the emigration, brought scandal upon the *Scotti*. And (so ancient is the process!) they were ousted by the men of Scotland. The number of emigrants from Ireland grew fewer because 'the Scotch, under cover of the actual sameness of their name in Latin (*Scotti*) with that of the old Irish, succeeded in passing themselves off as the real founders of the *monasteria Scottorum* and gradually displaced the Irish in those places where German monks had not already installed themselves.'

So far the main chronicle. The second, and far less valuable, of the two papers of which the book is composed, is little more than a brief essay upon the place held by the major Irish Saints in the local folklore of the Continental towns and villages they or their relics are reputed to have visited. 'Death itself did not put a stop to the peregrinations of these *transmarini*. Their relics passed from monastery to monastery, from church to church, and with them went all those attributes of folklore to which their names remain attached with remarkable persistence.' Inevitably the essay partakes of the nature of a guide-book and would be useful mainly to any pilgrim who from patriotic or religious motives might wish to seek for traces of the Irish *peregrini* of the early Middle Ages.

The widespread character of these memories is indeed remarkable. No one but the specialist surely is aware that the liturgical books of Genoa witness to the devotion to St. Brigid of Kildare which once flourished in Liguria. This Saint's connection with Brittany is better known—apparently so late as 1921 there was trouble over the attempted replacement of an old statue of the saint in the Church at Morhiban. And, of course, St. Patrick, mainly in Brittany, and St. Gall, in Germany and Switzerland, figure largely in liturgy and folklore. 'The memory of the Irish saints still lives in the lands that are watered by the Marne, the Meuse, the Rhine, and the Danube.'

It cannot be pretended that the book is at all exhaustive. Adverse criticism would lie on the score of 'scrappiness.' The story of six centuries of pioneer missionary work cannot be told in 150 pp. of comfortable print. Several of the chapters are slight in the extreme and others are little more than chronicles of names. This defect, however, should matter the less to the serious student of the subject since there are in the footnotes ample references to original sources, standard authorities, and periodical literature upon which are based the two studies here given more permanent form. W. G. A.

THE PRACTICAL USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.[1]

A correspondent in the April number of the *Modern Churchman* was complaining of the way in which the Bible is nowadays regarded, not as a storehouse of spiritual truth, but as a collection of what are vulgarly known as 'tall stories.' In particular the problem of the practical use of the Old Testament is being shirked to-day. A good sermon on the Old Testament is rare indeed. The clergy who are really interested in the subject may be roughly divided into two classes—Hebraists who study the Old Testament critically, and whose interest is rather archaeological than religious, and verbal inspirationists who believe in cramming the minds of the young with stories of the patriarchs or the less immoral doings of the Judges under the pretence of instructing them in the rudiments of the Christian Religion.

Mr. Lewis Johnson belongs to the small band which is in neither of the above classes. He approaches the Old Testament from the modern critical standpoint, while endeavouring to extract from it homiletic material. He deals with Old Testament stories rather than with the poets, prophets, and philosophers—in other words with the only part of the Book known to the general public. One of the few things we do know about our old friend the man in the street is that his knowledge of the Old Testament never extends to the Socialism of Amos or Isaiah's foreign policy. Mr. Johnson has been wise in limiting his field. In one case only does he stray from it and that is to include Jonah, the best known and least understood of all the prophets. The legends about Elijah, Elisha, and Daniel are also included, but otherwise the prophets do not come within the scope of the book.

Mr. Johnson, however, wishes to do more than interest the general public. He seeks to help teachers of Scripture by giving concrete examples of the right method of approach to Old Testament subjects. Such books are sorely needed. In revolt from attempts to whitewash a Jacob, or reconcile *Genesis* and geology the modern preacher avoids the Old Testament altogether, half afraid of shocking his congregation by letting it have the truth. This is a pity. There is a real place for good sermons on the Old Testament. Let us observe Mr. Johnson's method, which is at once interesting and instructive. He first treats the story with which he is dealing critically, and then having cleared the ground proceeds to draw an appropriate lesson. He is never provocative in handling the critical questions and he has a gift for suggesting the possible facts underlying narratives of the miraculous which few possess. Attempts to get at the non-miraculous residuum beneath some of the Elijah and Elisha stories, for example, such as are to be met with in most commentaries are sometimes singularly unimpressive. Mr. Johnson, however, offers the same explanations (for he makes no claim to originality in such matters) in a way which enlists our sympathetic attention even where we may disagree. By taking trouble to reconstruct for us the details of the scene and by a frequent use of analogy and illustration he creates a very different atmosphere from that of the commentary. The lesson here is obvious, and applies to more important aspects of the question than the piercing of the miraculous crust. Most of the fruits of Higher Criticism remain to be gathered, and they will only be gathered by those who are willing to exercise their imagination.

[1] *The Legends of Israel.* By LEWIS JOHNSON. (Geo. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1924; 7/6 net.)

In a collection of sermons (for these are sermons rather than essays) it is inevitable that there should be differences in quality. We must confess to a preference for those dealing with the more legendary and purely mythological subjects. For example we prefer 'The Lost Eden' or 'The Dream of the Heavenly Ladder,' to 'Gideon and the Fleece' or 'The Destruction of Sennacherib.' Mr. Johnson quotes freely from both novelists and poets, and is rich in the use of illustration. In the earlier stories he is perhaps too lavish. There is certainly too much matter in some—a bewildering array of criticism, poetry, and homiletics which is more effective in a book than it would be in the pulpit. It is perhaps this excess of matter which tempts one to raise a difficulty at this point. How can the Old Testament still be used as milk for babes? To begin with, if it is to be understood intelligently, it demands some background of general reading such as a child or uneducated person does not possess. It demands likewise the ability to distinguish between truth of fact and truth of idea. It would be interesting to see how many of these twenty-five admirable sermons could be 'potted' for Sunday School use. We doubt whether even two or three would prove suitable; which suggests that Charles Marson was right when he wrote *Huppim and Muppim*. Is it wise to start children off with Old Testament stories? Would it not be far better to begin with the New Testament and some elementary teaching about God, and Sin, Prayer, Grace, and the Sacraments? The hard fact is that the lessons we draw from the Old Testament are no longer the obvious ones which appealed to Deuteronomic editor (D) or to Priestly writer (P), or do still appeal to our modern verbal inspirationists. The Old Testament is quite definitely more difficult also for that provoking individual, the plain man. Sermons such as Mr. Johnson's are admirable but they will not provide nourishment for the feeding-bottle, we fear. At the same time it is the duty of those who teach Scripture to prepare those who sit at their feet for this kind of food. In the Services of the Church we should like to see fewer lessons from the Old Testament, but combined with a real effort to explain them. O. F. C.

JESUS AND THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.[1]

In his recently republished work, *Jesus and the Christian Experience*, Mr. Henry draws a familiar contrast between what he conceives to have been the gospel of Jesus and the forms it has taken in institutional Christianity, which he regards as the constant opponent of spiritual truth. This bias tends to reduce the value of an otherwise excellent book. Had our author shown more sympathy with the distressed Churchmen of more primitive times who, face to face with innumerable travesties of Christianity, nevertheless managed, with remarkable success, to preserve its main features intact, we might have felt more confidence in his presentation of his main theme. As it is, we feel that, though Mr. Henry has done yeoman service in thus bringing to light the fundamental basic fact underlying Christ's revelation to us, he has yet gone to work with such unnecessary vigour that he has seriously impaired the value of his find. For example, speaking of the Athanasian Creed, which, of course, we all know was not written by Athanasius himself, he says:

> 'The candid audacity, or the brutal frankness, with which it carefully enumerates and defines the contradictions of the orthodox theology, till one might believe it the burlesque of an adversary, could not shake its hold upon the veneration of the pious.' (p. 289.)

[1] *Jesus and the Christian Experience.* By Francis A. Henry. (Putnam, 1923.)

Professor Bethune-Baker, one of our greatest liberal theologians, say of the same creed that, more than any other, he prefers it as an expressio of his own theological and Christological beliefs, and that 'to the trainee theologian its assertions on these points ring as true to-day as ever.'[2]

In the same book Professor Bethune-Baker incidentally gives the weigh of his authority against the contention of Mr. Henry that Jesus made n claim to be the Messiah. On page 13 he says:

> 'That our Lord did deem Himself to be the Messiah is recognize as certain even by many of those who tend to believe that in these matters . . . . tradition must be wrong.'[3]

Moreover, dealing with Marcion, our author makes the assertion:

> 'When Marcion rejected the Old Testament altogether and insiste that its God was not the God of Jesus, it was not the only instanc of a clearer apprehension of Christianity than lay in the view o orthodoxy.'

This may be true, but we recall Professor Burkitt's judgment that however reasonable Marcionism may have seemed to Marcion's contem poraries, its acceptance by the Church would have rendered impossibl for ever any concord between her doctrines and the modern evolutionar view of creation.[4]

Nevertheless, despite these defects, we find ourselves able to agre with many of the leading ideas put forward in this book, *e.g.* that Jesu Christ, by his insistence on the 'essential oneness' of the Divine an the human, struck at the root of that fatal dualism which had hitherto prevailed in all religions, and, even in Christianity came to overlay the teaching of the primitive gospel. We agree also with our author's con tention that authority in religion, in the sense of legally imposed doctrines offends against the canons of truth, freedom, and the sacredness o personality, and certainly did not form part of the teaching of our Lord At the same time, because we are not blind to the great advantages which humanity has derived in the past from institutional religion, we do regre that this book, while containing much that is true and valuable, is marke by a very definite and much to be regretted bias against all forms o institutional Christianity. How we may ask, is the Christian ideal an influence to be preserved and propagated without institutions?

Despite the defects mentioned above, to which we must add the absence of any reference to the Resurrection—which all English Modern Church men hold to be a fact, however they may differ as to the mode—Mr. Henry's book remains a very full and comprehensive statement of a modernist point of view, which will thoroughly repay the trouble of perusal.

J. D. C.

NEOPLATONISM ILLUSTRATED.*

The opinion of the learned world on the significance of Neoplatonism has undergone some revision. It was once fashionable to suppose that the genuine Greek spirit evaporated with Marcus Aurelius, or even wit Aristotle. Plotinus and Proclus were regarded as fantastic mystagogues drugged with the delectable opium of Oriental superstition. Nowadays

[2] P. 6, footnote, *The Faith of the Apostles' Creed.* By J. F. Bethune-Baker. (1923.)
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[4] Pp. 308–9, *The Gospel History and its Transmission.* By F. C. Burkitt. (1920.)
* *Select Passages Illustrating Neoplatonism.* Translated with an Introduction by E. R Dodds, B.A. (S.P.C.K., 1923; 5/- net.)

'the claim of the Neoplatonists to be the spiritual legatees of Plato is in the main substantiated.' These rational mystics had divorced religion from superstition, and but for the collapse of civilization might have rendered that separation permanent. As it was, they achieved a good deal. The greatest early mediaeval thinkers, such as Scotus Erigena and Anselm, were heavily indebted to them; and, indeed, the influence of Neoplatonism on both early and later mediaeval philosophy has been indicated by Picavet in his exhaustive and fascinating treatise on the subject.[1]

Mr. Dodd's admirable Introduction to his well-selected and admirably rendered collection of passages is a piece of work which will take its place in the literature of the subject. It is choicely done, and will be appreciated by the scholar and understood by the general reader. As R. L. Nettleship pointed out more than forty years ago, Plotinus is more full of modern ways of looking at things than Plato or even Aristotle. The questions which interested him most were those about the nature of the soul and of God. He found satisfaction in an Absolute in which the distinctions between subject and object are done away, and which is therefore indefinable and (in the strict sense) unknowable, though we can and must have a sort of sense or vision of it.

In Plotinus, however, idealistic philosophy is reinforced by (or, rather, based upon) mystical experience. It is to initiates he speaks in a passage like the following:

> 'Those who have seen will know of what I speak when I affirm that both in her approach to the Divine, and again when she is come near and has fruition of it, the soul lives with another life; so that by her own condition she is assured that the Dispenser of true life is present to her. Beside this consciousness Man has need of nothing else: all his need is to put off from him the other things, to be founded upon that alone, and by stripping away every husk that invests him, to be merged in that sole identity. Thus we grow urgent to be released from this place and impatient of the shackles which bind our lower nature, that with our whole being we may embrace God and have no longer any member wherewith we lay not fast hold on Him.'[2]

Again:

> 'We must mount therefore to the Good, which every soul craves. Whoso hath seen it, that man understands me when I say that the Good is beautiful. . . . It is for this that souls must run their ultimate and greatest race. Blessed is he whose eyes have seen the vision; he who fails in this has verily failed; failure it is, although he should gain all else. . .'[3]

Here we have the genuine note; and the question may be asked why such a system of sublime yet rational ideas collapsed before the crudities of an obscurantist Catholicism. This difficult question is bound to suggest very different answers to those who think differently. There is little use in concealing the fact that irreconcilable divergences separated the two systems. 'The fundamental barrier between Neoplatonism and Catholicism was, as Augustine points out in an illuminating passage (*Conf.* vii, 10), the doctrine of the Incarnation, which the Hellenic mind to the last found insupportable.[4]

[1] *Esquisse sur les Philosophies Médièvales.*
[2] *Enneads* VI, ix, 9 (p. 122 in this volume).
[3] *Enneads* I, vi, 7 (p. 111).
[4] P. 22.

Some day perhaps, a strictly scientific historian of the origin of Catholicism will enable posterity to judge of these matters. As it is, the layman has little choice between Gibbon and the manuals read by candidates for ordination. And, as he has both a sense of humour and a respect for truth, he chooses the former. Yet it is certainly true that Gibbon has not said the last word.

J. C. H.

THE FAITH OF A CONSERVATIVE MIND.

In his latest volume, *The Christ of the Gospels*,[1] Dr. A. W. Robinson offers us what he himself describes as 'the thoughts which have come to him as the result of the eager and anxious enquiries of many years.' The series of valuable extracts from other writers given in the form of notes at the end of each chapter will leave his readers in no doubt as to the main sources from which the author's own thinking has been mainly stimulated. His teachers are Lightfoot, Westcott, Hort, and the conservative English scholars of our own day. Liberals are laid under contribution only for the sake of their more cautious utterances. If Sanday is quoted, it is the Sanday of the earlier days before the decisive turning point of 1912. If Harnack is appealed to, it is only on the somewhat rare occasions when his words are found to support the contentions of traditional orthodoxy. Otherwise the conclusions of German scholarship are left for the most part severely alone. The preface indeed goes so far as to assure us that 'if there are still certain questions to which it is not easy to give a quite decided reply, we may say with confidence that the tendency of scholarship has been increasingly in the direction of a position which is substantially that of the earliest Christian tradition.' There is of course an element of truth in such an assertion, but it is far too sweeping to obtain the ready consent of the dispassionate observer. And a study of present conditions of thought on the Continent, and of the utterances of men for whom Strauss's *Leben Jesu* is 'a conservative and a tame book,' would tend not a little to modify Dr. Robinson's rather daring claim.

The book is the product of a mind essentially conservative; its thought that of one for whom the new wine is distasteful for the reason that the old is better. This whole study of the Gospels, characterized as it is by a style more than usually attractive, and a gift of exposition (nowhere seen to better advantage than the the beautiful treatment of the parable of the lost sheep) which has won for the author a deservedly honoured place among those scholars who can appeal effectively to a large circle of readers, affords a peculiarly illuminating example of the power of a writer's basic presuppositions to determine not only the main trend of his thought, but to influence at every turn his interpretation of New Testament passages. Having once given his allegiance to the thesis that the Gospels are trustworthy, he pushes that principle rigorously to its logical conclusion, and applies it, we had almost said mercilessly, in every detail of his exposition. For practical purposes we find ourselves confronted with a New Testament miraculously immune from error. The interpreter may wander at will over all four Gospels to discover evidence for his contentions. It is rather naively suggested that 'those who may have any lingering doubts as to the practical feasibility of combining the portraits of the first three Gospels with that of the fourth' need but to study

[1] *The Christ of the Gospels.* By A. W. Robinson, D.D. (S.C.M., 1924; 4/6 and 3/-.)

a passage from the writings of Dr. Hort to have those doubts for ever removed.

Some of the evidence adduced in support of conservative positions is, to say the least, a little insecure. We are invited, for example, to find comfort in the circumstance that the main testimony for the Virgin Birth comes to us from the pen of a physician. And the fact that our Lord commends His mother to the care of the beloved disciple is offered as proof positive that 'Mary can have had no other sons or daughters of her own who would naturally care for her'; while the difficulties which seem to stand in the way of accepting the story of the Ascension as the narrative of an actual event are resolved by an appeal to the words of the Johannine Christ: 'What if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before?'

Dr. Robinson's active mind leads him not infrequently to bring forward suggestive possibilities and ingenious identifications, but the habit becomes dangerous if the uncritical reader is liable to confuse such suggestions with seriously propounded theories based on a carefully balanced estimate of historical data. It is indicated, for instance, that a study of the internal evidence of the first Gospel may lead to the conclusion that 'while the Gospel was possibly edited by another, its real author was the Apostle by whose temper and spirit the whole work is pervaded and penetrated.' And the main reason found for rejecting the hypothesis that Lazarus was the author of the fourth Gospel is that on such a theory 'it might not be easy to account for the first-hand knowledge that is exhibited of all that was happening while Lazarus himself was in the tomb.'

The book is a good instance of the extraordinary difficulty of combining a devotional and critical treatment of the same theme. Not of course that the combination ought to be regarded as for ever impossible. But in the present case it would appear that the author's love for his subject and legitimate desire to champion the essential truth of Christianity have at times led him to the adoption of lines of defence which will scarcely bear the searchlight of dispassionate critical examination.

W. M. P.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE GREY BOOK.

To the Editor of the MODERN CHURCHMAN.

SIR,

I have just read with much interest and a considerable measure of agreement the report on the Grey Book approved by the C.U. Council. Will you, however, allow me to say a few words on behalf of the title, 'Sundays after Pentecost,' which seems to be meeting with almost universal disfavour? The change proposed is neither arbitrary, fussy, nor Romanizing. It is an attempt to restore the proper symbolism conveyed in the order of the Christian Year. The Year begins with Advent, considered in this connexion as a preparation for Christmas; it goes on to direct our thoughts first to our Lord's birth, then to the manifestation of God in His earthly life, then to the events in which that life culminated, and so to Pentecost as the great result of it all in the birth of the Catholic Church. The rest of the Year logically presents the Church's life as a

series of Sundays *after Pentecost* leading up again to Advent, considered in this connexion as the final and perfect coming of Him with Whose first coming the Year began. Thus the Christian Year becomes, as it were, a perfect microcosm of Christian history, emphasizing the unity of its beginning and end in the coming of Christ, the Messiah of God's Kingdom. This beautiful and instructive symbolism is wholly spoilt, when we substitute for the old 'Sundays after Pentecost' the aggressively meaningless phrase 'Sundays after Trinity.' It is indeed fitting that the octave of the last historical festival of the Christian Year (Pentecost) should be used to sum up the whole revelation of God's nature which the historical revelation brought. But this octave of Pentecost clearly ought not to extend its proper title to the Sundays following.

It is no answer to this argument to reply that this symbolic value of the Christian Year is nowhere appreciated or understood. It is unappreciated, because it is not taught. And it is not taught because, so long as the title 'Sundays after Trinity' is exclusively used, it is not really there to teach.

OLIVER C. QUICK.

THE ABBEY, CARLISLE.
May 18th, 1924.

HOLY COMMUNION MANUALS.

SIR,

With reference to your notice in the *Modern Churchman* for April commending *The Fountain of Life*, by H. M. Buller, I should like to call attention to an excellent little book, *Sons of God*, by the Rev. E. M. Venables, Assistant-Master at Harrow. It was not designed expressly as a manual, but the middle part contains preparation for Communion, and the Service. It is most admirably compiled—with beautiful little prayers and short Scriptural meditations—out of a rich experience and understanding of schoolboy candidates. There are none at all of those excessive expressions of self-abasement or dogmatism so commonly and regrettably found elsewhere.

Those readers who remember a very striking article by the same author in the *Modern Churchman* for January, 1922, dealing very fully with 'Religion and the Public Schoolboy,' will expect of such a writer just what indeed they will find in his little book *Sons of God*, published by Messrs. Mowbray, Margaret Street, Oxford Circus, W., at 2/6. It is hoped that Mr. Venables will see his way to publish separately that part dealing with Holy Communion, so that it may be available in a cheap and convenient form, and thus possible for parochial clergy to give it to confirmands.

J. A. SMITH.

OVINGTON TERRACE, CARDIFF.
May 28th, 1924.

THE DIMINISHING CLERGY.

SIR,

All the reasons for the diminishing number of men offering for Orders which Mr. Grundy gives in the *Modern Churchman* for May, are probably real reasons, and though of different weight, combine in a large cumulative result. But I cannot help thinking he has left out what operates

most of all. If I am right, it is worth while to point this out, especially as it might be removed if the desire were more general.

Perhaps it may be put most concisely by saying that during a generation the clerical ideal has been passing from that of parson to that of priest. These need not be opposed, but are distinct. The difference is somewhat like that between secular and regular clergy in mediaeval times. The parson as the *persona* of the parish has (ideally) all that concerns the higher welfare of parishioners within his range. Nothing that promotes this leaves him unaffected, and the life of the parish in all its variety calls continually for his sympathy and service in numberless ways. If he has it in him to respond, his life is a full and varied one, with opportunities for leadership and influence in all that is human, and these crowned and confirmed by the religious and spiritual leadership which his office gives him. Good men prize and covet opportunity of such a sort. But the priest is a specialist, and is expected to concern himself with no more than special duties. He officiates in church, and the services at which he does so are increased in number till they may absorb so much of his time that he can render but little other service. He confines himself, and is restricted by the public opinion which stresses his 'priesthood,' to specifically 'religious' matters; and both he and others round him tend to forget that in God's world 'there is nothing secular but sin.' This conception of his office inevitably narrows his life, and limits his opportunities to those of a professional kind. These may indeed be very important in one specialized line, but easily become monotonous; and except for men of a particular type, afford too few points of contact with the broad stream of humanity, and give less opportunity for influence and leadership. A life so specialized does not attract men conscious of ability and energy unless they are so far ecclesiastically-minded as to wish for no line of activity save one.

It would be easy to support this view at length, but it is enough to point to a few facts and leave them to carry their testimony home. The proportion of the clergy has much diminished in which may be found men who serve as magistrates, guardians, county or district councillors; who farm their own glebe; who teach daily in the parish school; who study in the sense of real scholarship or research; who make some field of art or science a hobby. Yet all these occupations are not only compatible with a parson's duty, but there is not one of them which has not often proved a very valuable *religious* bond between him and his parishioners. Again, the emphasis of the ordinand's training has passed of late from the University to the Theological College; another step in specializing, and reducing the grasp on life. A dangerous tendency to regard the parish priest as the bishop's delegate goes hand in hand with augmentation of the latter's administrative or directive powers. What is wanted is the parson's independent responsibility under the law which binds bishop and clergy alike, and guards liberty for both and for parishioners no less. The best men neither shrink from responsibility nor resent subjection to lawful authority, the value of which they know; but they will not consent to forgo independence in action, or the loss of freedom by subjection to capricious direction.

So the abler and nobler man is attracted by the ideal which 'parson' expresses, but turns away from the narrower life for which 'priest' too often stands. And some, who take this emphasis on 'priesthood' to imply

what is properly called Sacerdotalism, turn away the more decisively, since the typical Englishman is quite convinced that the less he has to do with Sacerdotalism the better.

E. P. BOYS-SMITH.

HORDLE VICARAGE, HANTS,
23rd May, 1924.

MR. CHESTERTON AS A HISTORIAN.

SIR,

I have read with much interest the article on 'Mr. Chesterton as a Historian' in the May number of the *Modern Churchman*. Mr. Chesterton's attitude towards history seems to be modelled on that of the Church which he has recently joined. Catholic theologians tell us that there are certain 'historical truths so closely connected with dogma as to come within the range of the teaching authority of the Church.' For example, 'that St. Peter was at his death Bishop of Rome . . . is a dogmatic fact' which has been 'defined with infallible certainty by the Vatican Council.'* This means, in plain English, that the Church of Rome claims the right to construct history, not in accordance with the available evidence, but in response to the demands of Roman Catholic doctrine. In like manner Mr. Chesterton constructs history, not in accordance with the available evidence, but in response to the demands of his own brilliantly erratic theories. This presentation of history, this 're-moulding it to one's heart's desire,' besides being acceptable to those who 'wish to be deceived' by it, may well impose on the general reader if he happens to be ignorant or careless, or both. I wonder how far it imposes on Mr. Chesterton himself?

E. G. A. HOLMES.

* *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*. By Rev. S. J. HUNTER, S.J.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

We have received a number of letters urging that Psychical Research in its relation to the Christian Faith should be one of the subjects included in the programme of the August Conference of Modern Churchmen. As, however, we understand that the majority of the Conference Committee do not favour the inclusion of this subject, and as at this stage it would be very difficult to find a place for it in the programme, we have decided owing to the severe limitations on our space not to publish these letters, although we are glad to have received them.—ED. *M.C.*